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THE Journal for all interested in—

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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THE FUTURE . . OF LONDON.

ONLY a few years ago it seemed that the growth of the "great wen," as Cobbett called the metropolis, was a thing unpreventable. For hundreds of years it had steadily continued swallowing up villages, covering streams, forming crowded tenements where once there was field or waste. Now, apparently, the tide has turned. In the London County Council Report on Rates, it is stated that the number of empty houses is continually increasing, and that accordingly the burden on occupied houses becomes heavier and heavier. The poor ratepayers of Poplar have to make good a deficiency of nearly twelve per cent., and in Hammersmith the loss is eleven per cent. Mr. John Burns calculates that families are leaving the central boroughs at the rate of about thirteen thousand per annum. Fortunately, although this causes a certain amount of disorganisation and inconvenience, it by no means indicates any falling off in the prosperity of London. It is due, as all men know, to the modern passion for country life and the facilities afforded for enjoying it by the increased methods of transport. The tenements of Poplar may be emptying, but the great business thoroughfares are more crowded every year. It does not matter what increase is made in the means of locomotion, streets like the Strand, Fleet Street, Oxford Street and Cheapside are thronged from morning till night with a procession that seems endless. If

there had been any decrease it would have been seen there, because the average journey occupies so much less time now than it did a decade or two ago. The taxi-cab makes the hansom look as if it were only creeping, and the great omnibuses driven by mechanical power move faster than any horse ever did. Yet they seem to be ever more and more crowded. So it is with all the means of exit from central London.

When the tube railways were started, it was considered doubtful if they would be remunerative, so few was the number of passengers; but now in the morning and in the evening they are overloaded to a degree that is certainly uncomfortable and might be dangerous. Not only is every seat filled, but between the seats the strap-hanger has taken possession of every point of vantage, and there is not even standing room at the doors of the carriages. The passenger who wants to get out at a station on the way has very great difficulty in pushing his way through the crowd. It used to be the custom to say that the railway companies would suffer by the competition of the tubes and the various electric trams and omnibuses that now carry people to the suburbs; but the events falsified this prophecy also. A huge army of business people, of all sorts and both sexes, is brought in from outlying districts in the morning and carried back in the evening, and the area over which this population spreads is continually expanding. At first the egress from the City practically stopped at the suburbs, then it reached out for a mile or two beyond them, and now the country within a radius of thirty or thirty-five miles is drained of its population in the morning and refilled in the evening. Instead of suburbs, we have growing cities that have become the adjuncts of London, places like Letchworth and Golder's Green, for example. The ultimate effect is not in the slightest degree to be deplored. Those who take up their residence in country adjacent to the metropolis are invigorated by the fresh air, even though they do little more than go home to sleep. Business is transacted with all the greater spirit and vigour for the change. The movement and excitement of the journey are in themselves healthful. Thus the general effect is satisfactory enough, but that does not prevent difficult side issues from coming up for settlement. Many of the districts that used to be extremely crowded and are now in process of desertion were very highly rated. The local authorities laid out money liberally in provision for the poor, in drainage, paving, libraries, parks and other institutions that tended to make life liveable. The burden was felt even in the days of crowding. It is felt much more now, when a great many of the houses are empty or emptying; and the local chancellor of the exchequer will have to set his wits to work in order to remedy what is recognised as a real grievance. If the rates are allowed to rise, the process of forsaking those central districts will be accelerated, and yet it is difficult to know exactly in what way they can be lowered. Originally money was borrowed for work done on the assumption that the population as it was then would remain stationary for ever, and systems of drainage and sewage cost very nearly the same for a large as for a small number of people when once they have been laid down.

If the present movement continues and the prosperity of London is unchecked, it will become a fascinating speculation to try to imagine into what it will develop. The number of dwelling-houses is almost sure to keep on dwindling, as those who have once become accustomed to the country life will not easily change. On the other hand, the land they occupy must in the long run become available for business premises. We can almost fancy a time when London proper will consist of a great extent of houses utilised for business purposes and for the accommodation of workers who will in swelling numbers come in the morning and depart at night. The captains of industry will go out in their motors, perhaps at no distant date some of them in their flying-machines. Their lieutenants will pass to and fro with season tickets, and the toilers in carriages running under-ground, omnibuses and tramway cars. It will be a London very different from the city we know; but then, so vast and important have been the changes accomplished within human memory, there is nothing unreasonable in the anticipation that still greater changes await the London of the future.

Our Portrait Illustration.

THE frontispiece this week is a portrait of Lady Meriel Bathurst, who was presented at Their Majesties' first Court. Lady Meriel Bathurst is the daughter of the Earl and Countess Bathurst.

* * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.

COUNTRY



NOTES

MR. RUNCIMAN has proceeded on very sound lines in his arrangements for financing the credit societies of farmers. He has rejected the various philanthropic schemes which have been in the air for some time past, and on a business footing has induced six of the joint stock banks to accept the accounts of the credit societies on good commercial terms with regard to the period of advance, security and rate of interest. The Board of Agriculture has undertaken to issue papers, giving full details, at an early moment; but even with the scanty information now before us, we can see that the right lines have been followed. Farming has never been conducted in this or any other country without being able to command an occasional advance of money, and, unfortunately, the evidence is vast and irrefutable that in the past many good men have gone down because the private money-lenders to whom they applied saddled them with so inordinate a rate of interest. The way seems to be opening up now by which, when they have adequate security to offer, they can obtain advances at a reasonable rate from credit societies that are backed by the joint stock banks.

The Scottish Temperance Bill now before the Grand Committee of the House of Commons appears to be in danger of going the way of many of its predecessors. It afforded an opportunity to introduce real and valuable reform on the lines that we have already indicated in these pages; but prejudice has been too strong. The policy of degrading the public-house and trying to cover drinking with obloquy is being steadily persisted in, and the opposite policy has been as definitely rejected. Discussion has centred round two points—local option and disinterested management. Local option has been supported by the absolute prohibitionists, and they have assailed "disinterested management" as likely to bring drinking more into favour than ever and to make the public-house respectable; but this is exactly what the Public Trust Company have aimed at. Instead of attempting the impossible task of suppressing them altogether, they say: Let us make the public-houses places at which not only alcohol may be obtained, but food, tea and temperance drinks. Let the manager be encouraged to sell food and non-intoxicants by making his salary to some extent depend on the return from them, while he has nothing to gain by selling alcoholic liquors. At the same time, introduce wholesome, innocent amusements into the public-house and abolish the bar, so that the guest may have something to occupy his attention pleasantly and not be compelled to mingle in a crowd who are idling their time round the drinking-bar. This moderate and liberal view does not yet commend itself to the Government of the day.

On Tuesday, it was exactly a hundred years since Robert Browning was born at Camberwell, and the occurrence of his centenary was celebrated in a manner that would doubtless have pleased him if he had been alive. At Westminster Abbey there was a musical service, which included the singing of appropriate lines from "Saul," the music having been written for the occasion by Sir Hubert Parry. Sir Frederick Bridge played the music to Mrs. Browning's fine poem, "He giveth His beloved sleep." At College Hall, Lord Crewe, Bishop Boyd Carpenter, Canon Rawnsley, Miss Emily Hickey (one of the founders of the Browning Society), Mr. Ernest

Hartley Coleridge (grandson of the great Coleridge), Mr. H. C. Minchin, Mr. W. C. Kingsland, Professor Henry Laurie and Dr. Hill discussed such themes as the Oral Interpretation of Browning, Browning on Failure, and The Ring and the Book. In a word, they dealt with the same kind of problem that had occupied the attention of the poet while he was alive. Not the least interesting feature of the celebration was the collection of Browning's original manuscripts and early editions in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Many of them come from Mr. Forster, and in the manuscript of "Paracelsus" the poet has written "To John Forster, Esq., my early understander." It is an interesting and valuable collection.

MAY-DAY, OLD STYLE (15th).

What a sound of rushing feet,
Sure they do not dally,
Like a flock of pigeons white
Fluttering down each alley.

They are phantoms gliding swift
On this May-day olden,
Laughing, talking as they pass,
"Lads and lasses golden."

From the dim and sleeping towns,
Ringlets, ribbons flying,
Come, my lads, and follow them.
Are you dead, or dying?

Faces bathed in morning dew
Set the lads a-sighing,
So you know why from the town
All the maids go flying!

Lads and lasses waken up,
Be there no delaying,
If you would your sweethearts meet
You must go a-Maying.

See how youth is passing on!
Come, and let's be mated
'Ere the dew is dried, and we
Are left behind belated.

C. H. M. JOHNSTONE.

In a morning paper the other day there was an interesting discourse on good taste; but the writer appeared to have some difficulty in defining what it was. Taste is such a changing factor in life. What one generation likes another is contemptuous about, and the opposite of this holds true. One of the most extraordinary instances that we know of was in regard to FitzGerald's *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyám. This book was published and placed before a world so indifferent that in a year or two copies were found in the penny tray of second-hand booksellers' shops. By chance a man of letters discovered one, read it and proclaimed aloud that here was literature. The crowd followed with the greatest alacrity. Omar became the fashion. Young men, with roses in their hair, imitated his banquets, and people who had not the slightest appreciation of poetry began to quote him, while one illustrated edition after another was poured forth from the press, so that the elect began to wonder if there was not something vitally wrong about FitzGerald to account for this popularity.

Other books have gone through the same kind of history. Taste changes just as much in regard to houses, pictures, music and every other form of art. Good taste might be cynically defined as the art of repeating what is said to you. Nineteen-twentieths of it is the merest echo. Here and there someone with a natural endowment is placed in a position to make his or her voice heard. The cry is taken up. He says that all beautiful things are simple, and simplicity at once becomes a doctrine rendered absurd by the extreme to which it is carried. Sobriety of colour is preached, and the enthusiast speaks and acts as though all bright colours should be abolished altogether. In this way, the taste of a period is formed, usually to be altogether altered within the next few years. Good taste, therefore, remains now as ever a thing intangible, in the air, not to be grasped and reduced to definite terms.

Evidently the vast change in the ownership of English land which began two or three years ago is not by any means completed. In fact, the movement appears to keep on growing.

It would appear that the old owners of land are anxious to get rid of it, while new owners are by no means lacking. Despite the vast quantity of land brought on the market—one firm alone, that of Knight, Frank and Rutley, is offering for sale more than two hundred thousand acres during the present season—there is no tendency for prices to go down. On the contrary, their tendency continues to be upward. It would appear, therefore, that a great number of people in this country think that land in the immediate future is likely to be a more productive and profitable investment than it has been in the past. At least, that is the natural meaning to be assigned to their readiness to purchase. On the other hand, it would seem that this optimism is not shared by those who have had long experience in the possession of land. Their desire to get rid of it speaks eloquently of dissatisfaction with the burdens being placed on it.

In connection with this the Government have introduced a Bill into the House of Lords providing that tenants shall be given longer notice when the landlord decides to sell. Should the owner give his tenant notice, the latter, by giving a counter notice, may have his removal postponed for one year. This is the principal clause, but there are others. Land required for building purposes or allotments is excepted. A tenancy from year to year can only be determined on a year's notice being given. The weakness of the Bill is that it does not meet the requirements of the farmer, but only puts off sorrow to a later day. What he wants is to continue his tenancy and not have his livelihood wrenched up by the roots. There are two ways by which this could be accomplished. One is by State purchase; the other is that the owner should not be required to give his tenants notice but that they should be allowed to continue on the same agreement with the new owner. And the latter is the preferable.

Although the past winter was for the most part a mild one, we are reminded by cruel losses in the gardens, and in some orchards, by the partial injury to perhaps the finest show of cherry blossom ever seen, that we did suffer a night or two of rather keen frost at critical moments. Some of the early-planted sweet peas were badly nipped, and their loss may justify us in calling attention to a device for their protection which had the effect of preserving them in some gardens where it was employed. If the peas are trained within a double row of pea-sticks and on either side of the sticks small branches of laurel, with the leaves on, are driven into the ground, these serve as shelter for the young peas from the worst results of the frost, and also save them from the withering effect of continued bright sun and keen east wind such as prevailed almost through the whole of April. If gardeners could realise what a very slight shelter will often save their seedlings from frost, they would employ such simple means more frequently and much to their advantage.

Considerable interest has been created by the announcement that on Monday next, under the presidency of the Lord Mayor, a conference, organised by the National Food Reform Association, will be held in the Guildhall to consider the question of diet in schools. This subject was brought prominently before the public in a recent law case, and it is constantly receiving the attention of parents, doctors and teachers. According to all the best educational theorists of to-day, physical care should be taken in hand side by side with the mental care of children. The body and the mind react upon one another. Good digestion is the best preparative to mental activity, and mental worry has a very evil effect on digestion. These are times when the theorist is very much abroad, and many curious and out-of-the-way suggestions are made as to the manner in which children should be fed; but the common-sense of the majority will in the end insist on the adoption of a few very clear and simple principles. We say principles because it would be absurd to lay down dietary rules for imposition on all sorts and conditions of children. Variety of food is one of the first essentials.

We notice that the enterprising Master of Harrow County School has arranged for the pupils to camp out in turn during the advancing summer. This is an admirable arrangement, as it is impossible for either juveniles or adults to have too much fresh air. But we are struck with a few hints on diet which Mr. Ernest Young, the Master in question, gives in the course of an explanation of his camping-out scheme. Every boy is instructed to bring from home sufficient tea, cocoa, sugar and several other articles for his own needs. For dinner, when they make this meal themselves, they are instructed to bring a quarter of a pound of meat and two potatoes. This

does not point to a very enlightened form of diet. Vegetarians would object to the meat altogether; but in that they would be going further than the best opinion warrants. Plenty of milk, plenty of new-laid eggs, plenty of cooked vegetables, are all good for the childish frame, and may be given in unlimited quantity, always assuming that the milk is pure, the eggs really new-laid, and the vegetables fresh from the garden. The childish appetite enjoys the flavour of meat, and there does not seem to us to be any good ground on which it should be thwarted. Tea, however, might be very advantageously left out and its place supplied by oatmeal porridge, except, of course, in the case of those to whom this dish is unsuitable. With wholesomeness and simplicity in the character of the food, there should be regularity in meals, and there should be no long intervals between them.

BEFORE AND AFTER.

Infinite oh man was the foretime ere thou camest to thy dawn,

—GREEK ANTHOLOGY.

They stood at eve beside a tideless sea,
A wistful shore.

—Chill, chill the wind that speeds on moor and lea
To come no more.

And waiting, they a tranced silence kept,
As if white dreams
Like brooding doves in halcyon twilight slept
By tranquil streams.

Mists, drifting mists and shadows, and the flight
Of unseen wings.
—Chill, chill the wind that seeks the Gate of Night
And mortal things.

'Twas thus they came, as shadow and as shade,
In mystic hour,
To these dim lands whose youth from dust is made
Or fading flower.

Flame that is dream and dream that is a flame
Ye pass alone!
—Chill, chill the wind that sweeps across your name
On carven stone.

M. C. LEIGH.

It is satisfactory to learn that the experiment of appointing an official guide to conduct parties of visitors round the galleries to explain those exhibits which are of general interest has met with sufficient appreciation on the part of the public at the British Museum to justify the authorities of the Natural History Museum in instituting a similar service at South Kensington. Here, as at Bloomsbury, each tour will last about an hour, and the Museum will be divided into sections, which will be taken respectively at stated hours. In this way the round of the whole Museum will be completed in a week. The gentleman appointed to the post is Mr. J. H. Leonard, B.Sc., and we understand that he will commence his duties on Monday, May 20th. There is, of course, no intention that anything in the nature of a lecture shall be given; but it is the wish of the authorities that the casual visitor shall have pointed out to him (or her) the specimens of special interest and their significance in the scheme of Nature, while he will also learn something of their life-history, habits and environment. It will be of great interest to watch the progress of the experiment, and especially to note as time goes on which section of the Museum under the new service will be the most popular.

Both the alder and the May-fly have made quite abnormally early appearances this year; moreover, all the trout streams had a splendid wash-out during the floods of the winter, trout came up to spawn before their usual date, and all, in spite of the losses that no doubt the fish suffered on many rivers in the great heat of last summer, promised us unusually fine sport with them in the spring. What has happened we all know—the driest and most unfavourable April on record. It is very astonishing that, despite these unfavourable conditions, Lake Vyrnwy had a record bag for the month. What was perhaps also a record bag was made by the Tweed Commissioners, who took advantage of the almost midsummer lowness of the water of that river to net out grayling and roach from the lower reaches, and took no less, in numbers roundly stated, than six thousand. That is an exodus which ought to give opportunity for a considerable immigration of trout, and will make a deal more food available for them. Another point in the early angling of

the year, which may be noted, is the large average size of salmon taken in the Wye. There have been at least three caught on the rod of over forty pounds' weight, and two of these were nearer fifty than forty.

The ceremonies at Uffington to celebrate the memory of the late Tom Hughes—the name is so much a household word, that to speak of it otherwise than with this curt familiarity would seem an affectation—may arouse surprise in the minds of many at the suggested associations with Sir Walter Scott. Such a name as Wayland Smith, for instance, and his cave will remind us of the Wizard of the North rather than of the

author of "Tom Brown's Schooldays." The truth is that Sir Walter owed much of the information about this region which he used when writing "Kenilworth" to Mrs. Hughes, wife of Canon Hughes, Rector of Uffington. In a letter to her, he expresses his thanks for a drawing, which she had sent him of what he calls "Wayland Smith's Cromlech." This Mrs. Hughes was a regular correspondent of Sir Walter, and on two occasions at least paid him visits of some length at Abbotsford. An account of them, as narrated in her diary, together with some of the correspondence, was published a year or two ago by Messrs. Smith, Elder in a volume entitled "Letters and Recollections of Sir Walter Scott."

THE MAY-FLY OF THE NORTH.

THE trout-fisher on the chalk streams of the South, or the dreamily murmuring brooks of the Midlands, says, "The May-fly is up!" His brother beside the rocky-bedded, rackety Border streams, or the rollicking moorland rivers of the Northern Counties, says, "The May-fly is out!" The difference is no more than adverbial, yet in each case the exclamation conjures up thrilling visions of eagerly-feeding trout (plumping themselves out into the pink of fighting fettle and culinary condition) and of heavy baskets. It seems to be Nature's way, as compensation for measuring out the trout's rations during the rest of the year in more or less moderate doses, to give them one glorious opportunity for unlimited gormandising. As Kingsley said, "Why shouldn't they tuck in while they can? May-flies come to them at Whitsuntide, as club-feasts do to the clods, to give them one jolly blow out in the year."

On the lowland rivers, flowing over beds of clean sandy mud, the green drake, coming up in its thousands from its submerged larval home to wing its nuptial flight for a few brief hours in the sunshine, furnishes the banquet, and locally monopolises the title of May-fly. On the moorland becks and burns and the Northern rivers that go clattering over their boulder-paved courses adown the ling-clad or wood-fringed troughs of Dale-land, Nature prepares the annual feast, but alters the menu. For here, through lack of suitable larval habitat, the green drake is wholly, or comparatively, unknown; Nature serves up the



CASTING TO A RISING FISH IN THE ROCKY POOL ABOVE.

stone-fly in its stead, and that is the fly which the local angler of these streams means when he refers to the May-fly. In designating the stone-fly by this name he has classic precedent in Charles Cotton, who, in his portion of the "Compleat Angler," brackets the claims of the green drake and the stone-fly to the title, declaring them to be "the matadores for trout and grayling, and in their season kill more fish in our Derbyshire rivers than all the rest, past and to come, in the whole year besides."

The stone-fly is the largest of the angler's aquatic flies. It spends its larval stage among the stones in the bed of the moorland river, until, obedient to the mystic call of maturity, it seeks the thin water at the edges of the streams, lurking among the scarcely-submerged stones during the earlier portion of May, awaiting the appointed time for its final metamorphosis. During this period of its existence it is known to the North Country angler as the "creeper," an effective trout bait, while to the casual observer it is merely an inch or more of shudder-inspiring ugliness. Black, or nearly black, above, the upper side of the abdomen is marked with narrow yellow rings. In some specimens the same colour scheme prevails on the under side of the "creeper"; in others, however, the general shade of the under parts is light yellowy olive. The local sportsman pins his faith entirely to what, in his homely phraseology, he calls the "yellow bellies." Perhaps it is that, when used as bait, the lighter-hued "creeper" catches the eye of the trout sooner than does his darker brother. Anyhow, the former is the more deadly bait.



TYPICAL NORTH COUNTRY STONE-FLY STREAM.

Whether the appreciable difference between the two types of "creepers" appeals only to the eye of the fish or extends to his palate, I cannot say. I once came across an enthusiastic bait fisher who, making it a stern practice to taste his baits as the conscientious cook tastes his dishes, assured me, with becoming impressiveness, that "maggots had a sweetish flavour." Alas! he is dead now, and the opportunity to refer to his practical judgment the question of the rival flavours, if any, of the black and yellow waistcoated "creepers" is gone for ever.

During the last ten days in May and the first fortnight in June the "creepers" leave the water, and, seeking seclusion on the under side of the stones within a few inches of the stream, emerge from their husks, unfold their crumpled wings and appear as mature stone-flies. Turn over the stones in June on some great bed of water-side cobbles, and you will find the discarded husks in thousands—the complete outer shells, legs, whiskers and all, just as though an army of insect knights had crept out of their suits of armour and fled. Unlike the green drake, the May-fly of the North does not advertise its advent by an aerial pageant in which dainty coryphées, clad in grace and winged with iridescence, dance bewitchingly in the laughing sunlight. Only the female stone-fly is seen abroad, and she is too lumberly in flight to attempt airy evolutions, too Quakerish in garb, too bulky in body to indulge in light fantastic revels. She is the fat woman of the side-show to the green drake's fairy queen of the transformation scene. Bodily the perfect stone-fly resembles the "creeper"; but now light drab wings, veined with brown, folded flat upon its back, cover, as with a cloak of charity, many of its spectacular shortcomings. In the case of the female the wings are long, for maternal duties compel her to go abroad to deposit her eggs; in the male they are, apparently, degenerate, no more than half the size of his mate's; he has no use for them, and abides meekly at home in his stony chink, like an old man in the ingle-nook, waiting for the end.

Stone-fly fishing under favourable conditions, when a few inches of freshet have washed out the insects in great numbers into the water, and have brought almost every trout in the river into the edges of the current, eagerly searching for the luscious morsels, often yields tremendous baskets. A stock of bait having been procured by turning over the stones at the water's edge, the living flies being carried in some convenient receptacle, the stone-fly fisher mounts a couple of small fly hooks, one half an inch above the other, at the end of his gut casting-line. The upper hook may conveniently be a No. 1, the lower a No. 3. To bait the fly the lower hook is passed through the abdomen and brought out under the bait; the upper

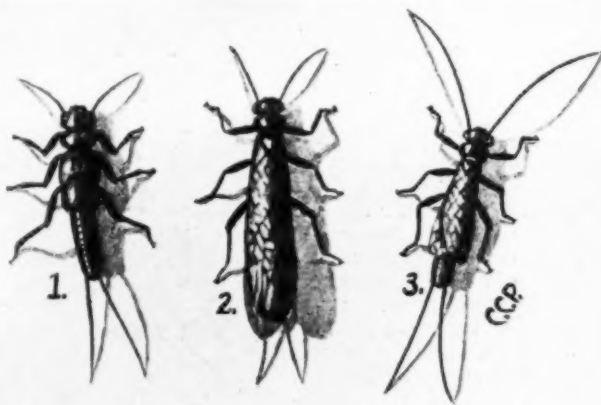


COLLECTING STONE-FLIES FOR BAIT.

hook is passed through the neck of the insect and brought out above. A few anglers prefer the smaller "jack" or male fly, which is usually about an inch in length; but the majority prefer to fish with the female, which, from the nose to the end of its folded wings, frequently measures an inch and a-half, and makes a conspicuous bait. Probably in effectiveness there is little to choose between the two. With its more generous expanse of wings the female seems to attract more trout, as it comes fluttering down the surface of the stream; yet the very cause of its greater attractiveness renders it more liable to be sucked from the hooks with impunity. The bait is cast with

a fly-rod after the manner of an artificial fly, and in a bold, sherry-coloured water I have known men fill pannier and pockets until aching arm and shoulder compelled them to desist while yet the tale of possible slaughter was still far from complete.

Pot-hunting? In many cases I am afraid it is nothing else; in other instances, however, it may be that the unusual experience of encountering trout recklessly, ravenously on the feed temporarily upsets the angler's code of sporting ethics,



THE STONE-FLY.

1. Creeper (male), 2. Creeper (female), 3. Jack (female).

and inspires him with a passing lust for slaughter and records. In these days, when scientific fish preservation is taxed to its utmost to keep up the head of trout in our streams to the numerical standard demanded by sporting requirements, the angler's basket might well be limited to a score of trout; but the facts that during these summer orgies such huge catches are possible and that during this period the fish put on flesh at a phenomenal rate are striking proofs of the immense economic value of a liberal hatch of stone-fly on rivers where the general rise of aquatic fly is characteristically meagre. None too soon the attention of pisciculturists, after being concentrated largely on the cultivation of natural food for the infant fish in the nursery ponds, is being turned to the important question of increasing the natural food supply for the mature fish in the rivers. There are trout streams on which, though to all appear-

ances they offer suitable breeding-grounds, the stone-fly is absent. In such cases the introduction of the fly might prove of immense advantage. We have it on record that the green drake has been successfully transplanted from one river to another—as in the case of the Manifold, in Derbyshire, where, it is said, the drake was introduced by old John Fosbrooke from the Dove—and the stone-fly, by reason of its hardiness in both the "creeper" and mature stages, offers far less difficulty in transportation than the green drake.

Of all forms of bait-fishing for trout there is, to my mind, none prettier or more sporting than fishing the stone-fly in low, clear water, when almost every fish has to be carefully stalked and the methods employed—save that the natural fly is used instead of the artificial—closely approximate the fascinating arts of the dry-fly fisher. Let the scene be laid on a shrunken North Country beck upon which the June sun blazes from a dome of unclouded blue; let the wild thyme scent the air, and the streamside be a-blush with the pink of showers of bird's-eye primroses, and the rugged banks aflame with the golden glory of the great yellow globe-flowers; and let there be a whiff of up-stream breeze to aid the delicate manœuvring of the tender fly. Then,

though the basket be not prodigious, there shall be a happy lingering memory of art triumphant associated with the capture of each successive victim of the day. The finest tackle must be mounted, and, wading up-stream, the angler must use every precaution to keep out of sight of his quarry, while it is a distinct advantage, I have found, to grease the running line as in orthodox dry-fly fishing. Gently the fluttering morsel falls on the surface of an oily glide; slowly it floats along for a couple of yards, and disappears in the vortex of a sudden tiny swirl. A responsive tightening of the line, and the angler is setting to partners with a lively half-pounder. There, in the shady corner under

the bank, he spies a good fish poised motionless in the water. Almost breathlessly he crawls within casting distance, a wave of the wand places the fly a couple of feet before the neb of the, apparently, dozing trout. Will he take it? Owing to the direction of the light every detail of the tragedy is distinctly visible, as the fish rises to the bait, sucks it under, turns with it, and makes his first wild rush as he feels the prick of steel and the tug of restraint. There, in the rocky pool above, casting to a rising fish; yonder, at the rippling mouth of

a tiny tributary rill, where a fish surely ought to be; again, in the shallow eddying bay beside the head of a dancing stickle—at all these likely spots, as well as in the edges of the rougher currents, the clear-water stone-fly fisher discovers his possibilities, and so finds greater joy in his eventual dozen, each well earned with skill and scrambling, than he would in unloading himself of fifty or sixty fish dragged ignominiously from a purblinding flood.

W. CARTER PLATTS.

THE OUTLOOK FOR CRICKET.



NEARLY RUN OUT.

EVERYTHING points to this being a record season for cricket. Interest in the game is quickened by the presence in this country of a South African team and an Australian team. Never before, as far as we know, have two Colonial teams been in England simultaneously.

The success of the English players in Australia and, in particular, the achievements of one or two of the younger men, have also helped to draw attention to the game. Finally, the contest for the championship will probably be much keener than usual. During the long years in which it was held by Yorkshire, no other county seemed fit to enter into real competition with the Northerners. After that, Kent established a superiority which appeared to be unassailable; but the sudden victory of Warwickshire invests the situation with a touch of the dramatic. Some critics

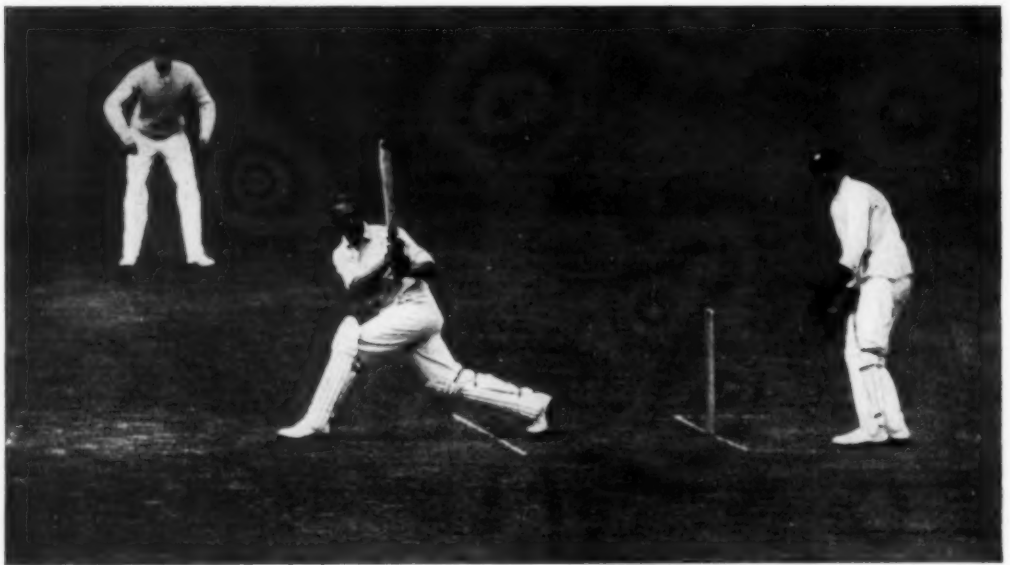
appear to think that Mr. F. R. Foster was extremely fortunate, and that if things had been otherwise than they were, Kent would have been able to retain the title. But it would be idle to attach too much importance to talk of this kind. We all know what actually happened, we can only guess what might have happened under a different set of circumstances. Mr. Foster, in spite of his youth, or, perhaps, in a measure because

of it, has shown himself a most brilliant and resourceful cricketer. He is evidently a born leader as well, and the Warwickshire men will come into the field this year with the confidence that naturally accompanies success. What may be called the opening match of the season was played on the first days of May. It was the usual match of the M.C.C. against Nottinghamshire. The play proved



GUNN—BATTING.

to be all on one side, the Notts men were evidently out of practice. It is only fair to say, however, that the team put up by the M.C.C. was an uncommonly strong one. It included three members of the South African team—Mr. Faulkner, Mr. Tancred and Mr. Snooke. They all played well, especially Mr. G. A. Faulkner, who made 131 before being caught. The other important scores by the M.C.C. were 62 by Mr. Tancred, 81 by Mr. C. B. Fry and 37 by Mr. J. W. H. T. Douglas. The Nottinghamshire men did very little. Iremonger compiled 55, and Mr. A. O. Jones 36; but the side was out for 220 in the first innings, and only made 196 in the second. So that the M.C.C. won easily by a single innings. For the club some very good bowling was done by Douglas, Tarrant, Hesketh-Prichard and Snooke. It was not a good display of the county, but we are inclined to think that there was nothing more than lack of practice to account for it. In the M.C.C. team were a number of players who have been kept in excellent form, while the counties have passed through an extremely moist winter that curtailed their opportunities to keep in condition. However, to use Mr. Asquith's phrase, we must "wait and see." In the course of a few weeks a sufficient number of inter-county matches will have been played to give a fair indication of the relative strength of the teams. We do not believe that even International cricket will diminish the interest in the home matches; but, of course, the Test Matches will be the great events of the year. A selection committee has been appointed for the purpose of choosing representatives, and this has been done on rather a new plan. It consists of Mr. Fry (the captain of the eleven), Mr. H. K. Foster and Mr. J. Shuter, with power to add to their number. Neither of the two last-mentioned will be a candidate, and the arrangement ought to work very well. Mr. H. K. Foster belongs to a family of keen sportsmen, all of whom are good judges of what other men can do in the game, and Mr. Shuter was captain of Surrey when that county was at its best, so that they may be trusted to give the very best assistance to Mr. Fry. They will be helped to some extent by the result of the great game which is proceeding at Kennington Oval as we write. It is England against The Rest, and the names of those who compose the former team are as follows: Mr. C. B. Fry (Hampshire, captain), Mr. R. H. Spooner (Lancashire), Mr. P. F. Warner (Middlesex), Mr. F. R. Foster (Warwickshire), Mr. W. Brearley (Lancashire), Rhodes (Yorkshire), Hobbs (Surrey), Barnes (Staffordshire), E. J. Smith (Warwickshire), Woolley (Kent), and J. W. Hearne (Middlesex), while The Rest are: Mr. J. W. H. T. Douglas (Essex, captain), Dean (Lancashire), J. Sharp (Lancashire), Humphreys (Kent), Seymour (Kent), W. C. Smith (Surrey), C. P. Mead (Hampshire), Hayward (Surrey), Strudwick (Surrey), A. E. Relf (Sussex), and Clark (Ireland).



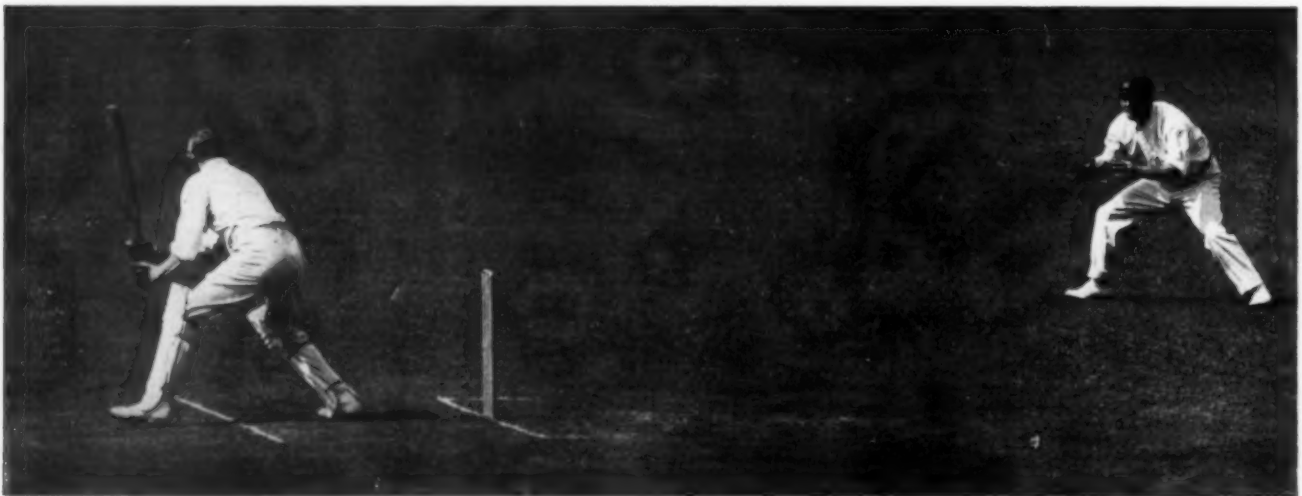
L. J. TANCRED OF SOUTH AFRICA BATTING.

In addition to this, three other matches began on Monday. Notts played the Australians, Derbyshire the South Africans, and the M.C.C., Yorkshire. The feature of the games was that several new players were brought to the front. In The Rest team was included Clark, a newly-discovered "googly" bowler from Ireland. He was very smart in the field and his bowling was good, though not immediately effective in securing wickets. The Australians played a number of new men against Notts. In fact, only Gregory, Bardsley and Whitty played in the match against Notts last year. In the M.C.C. match Yorkshire displayed much of its old spirit. Hirst especially was in splendid form and took five wickets in the first innings.

AGRICULTURAL NOTES.

SUBSTITUTES FOR "SEEDS."

IN the Eastern Counties of England, and I expect elsewhere, the dry summer of 1911 was the cause of a large acreage of "seeds," the general term for clovers, sainfoins, etc., failing to plant. In consequence a shortage of fodder and a small acreage of hay in 1912 was certain. The drought last month had made the prospect even worse than was anticipated. On light-land holdings which consist chiefly of arable land, the farmer generally crops half the soil under the plough with food for live-stock. He relies chiefly on seeds for summer food, and on "roots" for the winter rations. The loss those agriculturists whose seeds have failed will sustain this year is serious enough, but they are almost certain to see the bad effects in the succeeding corn crops. There is no better preparation for wheat or other cereals than a good clover crop and *vice versa*. On many farms fields are to be seen on which there is only half or a quarter of a plant of "seeds," and where such is the case weeds have filled in the gaps. The best plan will be to fold off these meagre and foul crops with sheep, then to plough the land immediately afterwards and to sow it as soon



A. O. JONES BATTING.

as possible with "roots" as food for stock or with mustard to be ploughed in as green manure. The shortage of keep for stock, owing to the inferior clovers, etc., will probably be most felt between Midsummer and Michaelmas, and endeavours should now be made to provide some substitutes for the second crops of "seeds" which are generally relied upon during that period to feed horses, cattle and sheep. Thousand-headed cabbage, early turnips and coleseed or rape may now be sown, and if the weather is suitable they should make excellent "sheep feed" from July onwards. For cattle I advise sowing early turnips, of which those known as Lincolnshire Red and Green Round are as useful varieties as any. Maize, too—that known as the White Horse-tooth is the best—may be drilled towards the end of May and in the beginning of June, and unless the summer is too cold, there is nothing provides more green food per acre or that is more relished by cattle and horses; it is especially valuable for milch cows.

THE RICHMOND HORSE SHOW.

Owing to the great expansion of late years in the jumping events, the executive is now providing a prize-list of record value. Two magnificent cups are offered this year, one for officers in uniform, the other for the champion leaper. We are again to have the very popular jumping in pairs, while the special class for high jumping is being retained, the first prize of twenty-five pounds being again presented by Judge Moore. In this class the jumping is to commence at a height of four feet six inches, the poles being then raised, at the discretion of the judges, until the competition

has been decided, this arrangement averting monotony and waste of time. The obstacles, as usual, will be single and double hurdles, gate, wall and water; but for the pair-jumping a fence, with rail in front, is substituted for the double hurdles. The rule as to competitors being in uniform or hunting costumes for the jumping events will again be strictly enforced.

THE DISORGANISATION OF THE MILK TRADE.

Several influences have combined to produce an unsatisfactory situation in regard to the milk trade this year. In the first place, the grass came away much earlier than usual, and the pasture at this season is uncommonly good, with the result that the flush of milk has come before its usual time; but just at the moment when the usual fall in prices takes place after the winter, consumption received a severe check. It was found by experience that poor families affected by the Coal Strike regarded milk as one of the first articles on which to effect a saving. This consumption fell off even in the face of a reduced price and of an improvement in quality. Milk in spring and summer is not only richer owing to the fact that the cows are able to obtain their natural food, grass, but grazing in the fields is the very best aid to cleanliness imaginable. Nearly all the pollution of which complaint has been made arises from the artificial method of keeping cows shut up during the winter. They are, naturally, very cleanly animals, and, if there is water about, do their own washing whenever the weather is hot. It is a great pity, then, that the most delicious milk which cows can produce is at the present moment to a considerable extent unsaleable.

JOSEF ISRAELS.

A LARGER collection than that now brought together at the French Gallery in Pall Mall could hardly convey a juster impression of the genius of the late Josef Israels. Here, almost for the first time in London, it is possible to follow the slow evolution of his long career. His earlier methods foreshadowed a productive energy which would speedily have been lost in the mass of undistinguished work contemporaries languidly enjoy and succeeding generations wholly forget. Had Israels remained the creator of such compositions as "The Bather" and "Meditation"—methodically finished exercises in the dull school of Ary Scheffer, without the occasional flights of romanticism that son of Dordrecht indulged in—Dutch art would not have been the richer. But the larger canvas, "Meditation," tells us something about the artist. An Ophelia-like girl reclines on the sloping banks of a dark stream. Her attitude is so unreal and theatrical that it can only be described by a stilted phrase. Yet, despite its faults, a painting of this size can only be carried to completion by indomitable will. "Meditation" was finished in 1849 or 1850, when Israels was about twenty-five years of age. The compiler of the catalogue is not correct in quoting his birth-date as 1827, for most Dutch sources of information give it as January 27th, 1824. Before the third decade of his existence closed, the young Jew had crowded much into his life. After many struggles he had fought his way out of the paternal money-changing office in Groningen, and, if he did not display the slightest evidence of inspired talent, he certainly proved that he had made the best of his time and had technical ability.

Ambition spurred his progress. "The Departure," signed and dated 1861, marks an important step forward. This carefully-elaborated and highly-glazed work recalls the pictures of William Collins and his school. During the early and middle periods of the nineteenth century, every country in Europe was manufacturing such studies. "The Departure" is a



THE SEAMSTRESS.

From the picture in the Israels Exhibition at the French Gallery, Pall Mall.

brilliant example of its class, and better than many of its competitors. A peasant woman and her two children are gazing out to sea. In the far distance is a fishing-boat, probably captained by the head of the family. The story is obvious, and although the work gives no indication of later methods, it shows that he had already deserted history for the genre in which he was destined to meet fame. It is a pleasing and cleverly-painted statement of fact, and Israels suppressed all evidence of personal feeling or emotion over the very ordinary little domestic drama.

"The Departure" represents one of his last efforts in this second manner. His accomplishment had been recognised in the shape of awards from Brussels and Manchester, although he was by no means in the front rank of his time. But in 1862 he forced himself on the public with "The Shipwrecked Mariner." After leaving the French Gallery the visitor should step across to the National Gallery and examine Mrs. Alexander Young's gift to the nation. With its intensely painful realism, "The Shipwrecked Mariner" is on an altogether higher plane than

"The Departure." In the latter the sea is a sheet of glass and the sky cloudless. Atmosphere is lacking, and the group suggests the arrangement of a studio. In "The Shipwrecked Mariner" grey, threatening waters curl and roll across the sand, the sky is lowering, while the hissing surf and the dull booming of the waves upon the shingle form a solemn funeral march as the dead sailor is carried to his home. The artist had found his true *métier*, and the expression on the face of the fisherwife who leads the tiny procession is the keynote of his subsequent work. Israels is a remorseless fatalist. He paints feeble humanity engaged in an eternal struggle against the terrific forces of Nature. The men and women in his pictures confront their fate without joy and without hope. Their doom is fixed, and they cannot escape. Israels' attitude is not unlike that of another profound student of peasant-life. In looking at his compositions we are reminded of that terrific sentence at the

close of "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" when the black flag flies over Winchester Gaol and Thomas Hardy's injured heroine has passed to her doom, the sport of the President of the Immortals.

Technically, Josef Israels was profoundly influenced by that Renaissance in France which stimulated all art half a century ago. He has been compared to J. F. Millet, but the likeness is one of temperament rather than of execution. Millet,



ON THE DUNES.

From the picture in the Israels Exhibition at the French Gallery, Pall Mall.

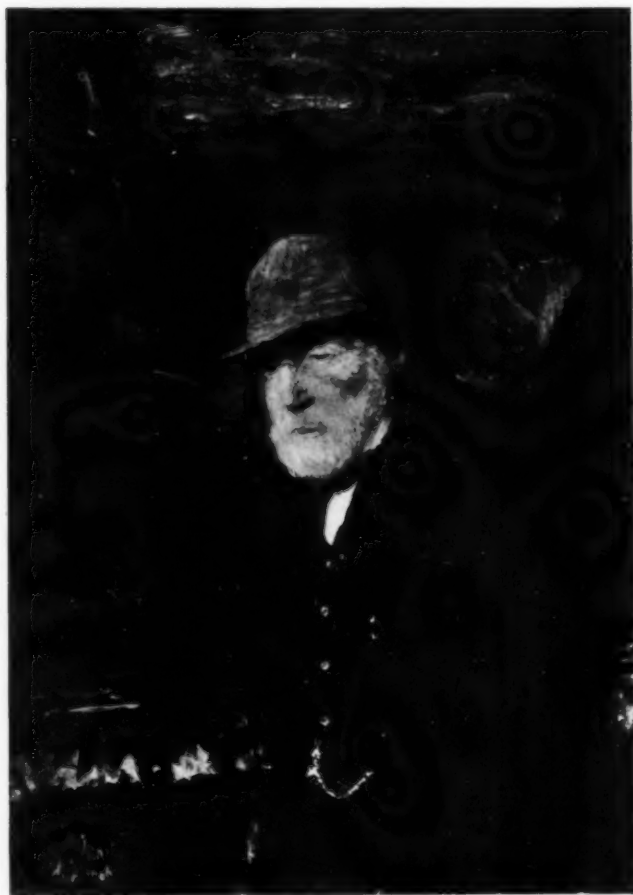
sketching on the plains around Chailly and Barbizon, was seized by the monotony of the peasant-life he sprung from. His shepherds and farm girls walk through the world with the gravity of actors in classical tragedy. Millet produced great pictures, but he did not accurately transcribe the life around him. Israels possibly exaggerated the gloom of the Dutch peasantry in the same manner. Lamennais once told Béranger that certain natures are born with a wound in the heart. Israels was of these. Life has its joys, but he could rarely see them. He could never shut his eyes to the disaster which threatened every tiny household in Zaandvoort. Scenes of the most poignant grief, sorrow that could find no relief in tears, appealed to him with morbid persistency. He repeats the same theme again and again. A favourite is the "Alone in the World," now at the Rijks Museum at Amsterdam. An old woman silently wipes her eyes with the edge of her apron near a bed on which her dead husband rests. In the French Gallery is a small and beautifully painted "Left Alone." A heavy-featured man draws to his heart a wondering child, while again in the background is the suggestion of a body covered in grave cloths. A third variant shows a woman crouching near a coffin. Israels probably repeated the subject a dozen times.

His pictures of children are delightful. They seemed to awake in his soul some appreciation of the world's happiness. They play together on the sands, they sail toy boats; but they are always in the presence of the menacing element. In "Gathering Seaweed" he sets on canvas an ordinary scene of the coast—a heavily-laden cart, a man busy with his fork and the usual grey sea with a sky touched by the glow of a dying sun. It is a masterpiece in which Israels revealed the depth of a truly poetical nature. Seated on a basket is a tiny child with a toy boat. She has forgotten her plaything, and it is being swamped by the incoming tide. Gazing out at sea, her thoughts are those "that do often lie too deep for tears." Turner painted a similar coast scene in "The Evening Star," at the Tate Gallery. There is the same wonderful after-glow, the same splendid paintwork; but the atmosphere of morbid introspection is not to be found. A dog leaps gaily at the feet of a young fisherman. Turner was light-hearted because he was a man of overpowering vitality.

And this is the difference between Rembrandt and Israels. The portrait in the French Gallery entitled "After the Mass" forces the visitor to cross the road and stand in front of Rembrandt's "Head of an Old Lady." There is no doubt that Israels was deeply influenced by Rembrandt, and no other modern painter has so nearly approached the Leyden master. The "Son of God's People" (a model to be found in another picture) is an even greater achievement, because it is more marked with individuality. But Israels has not the extraordinary scope of Rembrandt, because he lacked the miraculous gift of sympathy. Rembrandt opened his arms to life's joys as well as to its sorrows. Throughout Israels' work there is a continual note of doubt. Another Amsterdam Jew, Baruch Spinoza, preached the absence of freewill in man—dependent on causes without and not within him. That doctrine tinged Israels' art with sadness. In picture after picture he gives us a lonely figure seated on a desolate sandhill, the shifting earth barely held together by some straggling grass, and gazing—without expectation and without hope—upon the expanse of sea. The elements are cruel, and the enigma of existence not to be fathomed. Did not Heine stand on the shore of Norderney and propound the same inscrutable question. "Oh, solve me the Riddle of Life, that harrowing, world-old riddle," he wrote in "Die Nordsee."

The waves they murmur their endless babble,
The wind it blows, and the clouds they wander,
The stars they glitter coldly indifferent,—
And a fool waits for an answer.

"Sufferance is the badge of all our tribe," said Shylock, and Josef Israels was the son of an oppressed race. Melancholy had eaten into his soul. Perhaps the magnificent canvas, "The Scribe," which he completed in his seventy-eighth year, contains his answer to the riddle. Across an interminable scroll an aged and worn rabbi ploughs an enormous quill. He is a cripple, crutches hang on a peg behind his chair. The light is fading away, but his task is not completed. Through his mind



PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST.

From the picture in the Israels Exhibition at the French Gallery, Pall Mall.

run the words of Ecclesiastes: "Again I considered all travail, and every right work, that for this is a man envied of his neighbour. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit." Rembrandt followed the teaching of an earlier verse: "There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour." Israels was a great artist, but he fails to satisfy because he cannot tell us that there is joy in life.

HUGH STOKES.



TALES OF COUNTRY LIFE.

THROOSH. A LEGEND OF LOCH GUR.

BY
DOROTHY CONYERS.



IF ye climb the hills with their crop of sthones stickin' out here an' there, ye'll come to the grey lake nestlin' down in the hollows, with the edges ov it lappin' soft through the reeds, an' chasin' the land up to the very hills, with little rivulets an' bit streams of silvery wather, until the sthones dhrires it back, an' the grass is green an' dhry. An' thin if ye goes on inland ye'll find the old Rath with its belt ov thorns, that does be a ring of swate white in May, with the goulden primmeroses shinin' like sthars on the bank. An' here in the ould days the fairies'd be out o' nights, dancin' light across the grass, swingin' in the cups of the thorn blossom, or maybe sittin' discreet an' gentale in a ring while the king, Fiona, discoursed. An' there among them all, suckin' his little pipe wid the resht, ye'd see little Throosh, the tiniest of them all, wid his sharp little eyes lookin' soft at Fiona, the King's dather, an' she in shimmerin' green, wid her goulden hair floatin'. An' besides Throosh, Noreen, a little fairy no bigger than himself, that'd give him an odd pinch or a dig with a thorn whin he'd look too admirin' at the Princess, for they two were promised.

Now there was war, war, war in thim days, always war between the land fairies an' thim ov the wather. An' worse it got whin Cruskeen, the cowl'd-eyed, web-footed King ov the Loch, sot his eyes on Princess Fiona an' she sittin' on the big sthane that marked the boundthry of her country, an' sint messengers askin' for her for his Queen. Begonnes! the Rath King sint him wurrds back that warrumed his cowl'd ears, an' the war was bitherer than ivir.

An' thin, the Princess was that naughty an' wilful, she would be stayin' near the lake, laffin' to see the wather fairies comin' up to look at her, an' one day she sthayed too close, an' with wan schreech she was swhep in an' carried off.

So now the fairies sat solemn in the Rath, cryin' soft, an' the King'd hang his head and thrample the yelly flowers in his anger, an' sorra the thing cud he do. For if the Princess sthayed in the power of the wather fairies one year an' a day, then was she gone from her people for ivir, an' must sthay down in the cowl'd sorryful wather as Cruskeen's Queen. Pitiful messages she'd sind, and little fairies flew off at first light an' gaylike, but none ivir come back agin, but was tuk prisoners an' kep'.

So then, this night in early May, the Rath fairies sat bither an' sad, the min suckin' pipes an' the gerrils cryin' doleful.

"An' now there is but two weeks left to us," says Fiona, says he, liftin' up his head. "An' that impident vilyin," says he, "sinds me a message be the wather-burds, that on the last night ov the year, the Princess will be brought up, will walk three times around the lake. But, cowslips and thorn buds, what gud is that at all, at all, whin none can get near to her?"

"I would like," says Throosh, says he, "to thry to rescue the Princess." For all had thried an' failed. An' he was the only man who had not, for none thought he cud be of use.

"Yerra, Wish! What next!" says Noreen, laffin'. "Do ye think ye're so smhall," says she, "they would miss seein' ye?"

"I don't rightly know," says Throosh, cross-like. "Fair maybe, 'tis the bad bargain Cruskeen'll get whin her tongue do be givin' at him." An' he slipped away, for the heart was heavy in him. He had loved Fiona greatly, she bein' always sweet to him, an' he could not bear to see the gran' King, an' he frettin', frettin' for his dather.

So he rose light into the air an' flew into the night, an' whin he was some ways gone, he saw an ould wummun gotherin' sthicks an' two little rapscallions of wood fairies an' they takin' thim off her. Down flew little Throosh, all in his green. "Let the dacent wummun be, boys," says he, shrill an' angry.

With that they laffed and med for him, but he sthup up, brave an' quiet.

"Touch a Rath fairy an' ye dare! Ye brown vilyins," says Throosh, says he, "an' find out what 'twill bring ye."

Seein' the green dhress of him they ran off, and Throosh picked up the kippines an' put them on his back.

The ould wummun was cryin' over her wurk.

"I will take thim home for ye, Mother," says he. "Ye bein' wake an' ould."

"An' that is good of ye, sthrong man," says she, very grave; but the grey eyes of her laffed in her head, an' the lines of age seemed to play like wather above a smooth skhin.

So Throosh carried the sthicks to a little cabin dour, an' sat talkin' an' she askin' questions ov him. An' then she pulled somethin' out ov her apron pocket an' gave it to him—'twas a bit ov a crab apple brown an' withered.

"Take it," says she, "an' whin ye'd want to be someone else, kiss it an' wish. An' good-bye an' thank ye, sthrong man," says she. "There was others passed this way that did but laff at a poor ould wummun an' her sthicks. An' thry to rescue the Princess," says she. "Ye might succeed."

An' with that the night darkened and the cottage flickered in the gloom ov it, an' there was no ould wummun and no house; but somewheres above him Throosh thought he saw a face fearsome in its loveliness, and he fluthered off. For there was but one so lovely—the great witch, Moira Dhuv, that ruled all Fairyland, an' 'twas bad to see her at all. He flew off be the great lake, shimmerin' grey an' lonesome in the dark, an' home to rest until next night, an' said no wurrid of what he'd seen. But the days shlipped an' passed—until he cud wait no longer, for more fairies had gone and come back frightened like or remained away, an' 'twas the last night ov all when Fiona the Rath King must see his dather out on the cowl'd wathers, an' little Throosh was up and winged away, unbeknownt to all. Down an' on to the great lake, the wesht wind ripplin' it, an' the sob ov it whisperin' through the reeds, an' the lap ov it fightin' the pebbles on the land. He came discreet and soft-like, hidin' behind the big sthones, an' who shud he see out close to the big boundthry bowldther but a big man wid a black beard an' a kind of a cowl'd look about him. An' Throosh passed the time ov night to him, aisy an' civil.

"From the Rath, are ye?" says the man, says he, laffin'. "Oh, but there are a few ov ye below, cowl'd an' sad," says he. "An' have ye come to rescue ye're swate Princess?" says he, grinnin'.

Now Throosh looked down an' saw the feet the man was tuckin' away out of sight and the splayed hands ov him, an' the dreepin' look about his beard, an' he knew 'twas the King himself.

"I am not," says he, "Bein' too small, they never sint me; but I am come," says he, "to see her walk around the loch an' to see the King of the Loch, that they say is terrible ould an' ugly."

"Huh!" says the big man, coughin'. "Huh!"

"An' to throw an ill wish at him," says Throosh, says he, vicious like, "for darin' to carry off a dacent gerril from the Rath, whin a fish'd match him."

"Huh!" says the King, says he. An' he shlipped the fire out of his pipe and med to put the top on. "Quare manners they tache ye," says he, "in the Rath. Fishes an' weeds, where is the green vilyin?" says he, for Throosh had touched an' tried his apple and was within in Cruskeen's pipe hid away cosy an' comfortable.

"Gone back home," says the King, and wint shufflin' an' cripplin' across the shore. "Oh, I see ye all around," he says, laffin'.

Already the sthones was gettin' covered with the little Rath fairies that dared not come down to the lake, an' the King himself was howldin' the Queen's hand and biddin' her not to be bawlin' so loud an' disgracin' him. Down went the King through the grey wathers. Down to the still soft bottom of the loch with fishes dippin' to him as he passed, an' a great bustle goin' on, and little web-futted fairies lightin' lamps, an' great sthir entirely. The King took the top off his pipe an' little Throosh shlipped undther a weed to hide. Oh! 'twas grey an' lonesome there, with nivir a gleam ov sun or a yelly or white flower, but the brown weeds floatin' floatin' in the grey, an' the still, cool silence of it all. . . . Then Throosh thought of the apple an' he touched it an' wished, an' was like one ov the little gyards that was flowtherin' around, so that he could be at his aise amongst thim. So he hurried along with all the fishes dartin', and was afeard he might be chose for supper until he heard someone weepin', weepin' close by, an' he saw a dour in a rock an' wished himself through, an' there there was the little Princess all in her shimmerin' green, with the soft

gould hair fallin' round her, but the purty pink washed out ov her cheeks an' her big eyes an' afeard.

Throosh touched his apple an' there he was, an' she let wan screech, an' fell on him, kissin' him an' cryin'.

"Throosh, little Throosh from the Rath. An' the green dhress ov you, an' the primmeroses in yer cap. An' is it settled, Throosh?" Oh, am I saved, that ye are here?"

"It is not," says Throosh, says he. "An' don't be kissin' me agin, Fiona," says he, "for there's onè'll be questionin' me whin I gets home."

"Home," says she, with her voice like to the sob of the south wind. "Home—with the grass around me, an' the flowers starrin' it, and the wind whisperin' through the thorns, an' the blue sky above. An' here the cowl'd, the grey, grey cowl'd," says she. "Oh, Throosh, take me home."

"Don't be bawlin'," says Throosh, says he. "For I have a great magic." An' he up an' tells her all about his apple.

"Thin, 'tis aisy as aisy," cried Fiona, clappin' her little hands. "Give it to me, Throosh, quick," says she, "an' I'll wish meself to be like a wather fairy an' be away an' home in ten minyets onst I can git up."

"Av coorse," says Throosh, doubtfully, "that'd settle it. But ye see, there's meself. Faix an' the weather is cowl'd, and a pike's bite is no dacent ind."

"Oh, Vo, Vo," sobbed she, "thin what will we do at all, at all?"

"The King," says a voice outside, "is waitin' on the Princess."

"H'sh!" says Throosh, says he. "Go out to him. An' spake him fair, an' ask him to let ye go, an' if I niver sees the grass agin," says he, "ye shall be free."

So he changed agin and followed Fiona. There was a dhress ready, and he all of glitthrin' fishes' scales, but she would not put it on, but walked in her fadin' green, until she came to where King Cruskeen sat up on his throne of shells, and he glitthrin' in scales an' terrible ugly to see.

"Fiona of the Rath," says he. "Will ye marry me willin'?"

Fiona sthup up, so swate and forlorn and proud that the King might have been moved, had he not had a fish's heart in him.

"Cruskeen of the Loch," says she, "I niver will. As to forcin' me," says she, "ye will have but a poor droopin' Queen with the heart in her achin' for her own green land and the moonshine an' the flowers. Let me go, King," says she, "home to me father. Oh, let me go."

"Ye are too swate, Fiona," says he, lookin' at the loveliness ov her. "So since ye will not wed me willin', go and git ready for the lasht look at the green land which I must give ye, and then ye will belong to me," says he, "and be me wife befoure the dawn."

She said no wurrud then, but curtseyed so hopeless and proud that Throosh was nigh to cryin'. But he threw a little sthونه instead, an' cot the King in the eye and hurt him sore, and none knew where it come from.

"Och murther! murther!" says the King, says he. "I will have a black eye for me weddin'," says he. An' he clapped a passin' pike to it to cool it.

Back then they wint, but Throosh had thought ov somethin', an' he waitin'. Whin the dour shut an' the Princess began to cry he tore the apple in two halves.

"Och worrassthu," sobbed the Princess. "If I cannot have yer magic, Throosh, I will niver see the Rath agin."

Throosh gave her the half of the apple, whisperin' very eager. "Wish yourself me," says he. An' then he danced, for there was two Rath fairies in the rock prison. An' a great plan was in his head.

A few minyits later the gyards came knockin' an' the Princess waited for them, and they rose up. Ye see, there was this to privint thim escapin' too aisy. No strange fairy could get to the top of the loch without bein' took by a wather fairy, so they must be up befoure they cud git away.

And up they went through the cowl'd wather, an' then the heart lepped in Throosh as he saw the sthars in the sky, an' the dim hump ov the hills, an' saw the Rath fairies flutherin' far off. But he sthup up very discrète, for he had the Princess Fiona's shape on him and was by the King's side.

"Do ye see," says Cruskeen, very cruel, "all me gyards ringin' the shore? Smhall hope ye have of gettin' off," says he; "and now," says he, "walk around and soon ye will be mine for iver."

"Smhall," says Throosh, says he, "but sure I'll be wid you, Cruskeen Alanna," says he, an' he squz the King's hand till it near bled.

"Murther! murther!" says the King, wringin' it an' hoppin'.

"Ye're very swate all ov a suddint," says he, suckin' his finger.

"'Twas shy I was," says Throosh, droopin' his head hard agin the King's bruised eye.

But the King was glad, hurt as he was. For she was so fair, with the yelly hair around her, and her colour pink agin.

"An' now," he says, coaxin'. "I have a wish," says he, "to be wed on dhry land. Carry me up," says Throosh, "to the bouldthers there to put the ring on me finger. Sure I am yours now," says he.

"But," says Cruskeen, says he. "There! don't be bawlin'—I will—for ye'll niver see land agin."

An' so the great thrair ov thim sthumbled on to the land, until the Banshee grumbled, an' the wather fairies said they be sneezin' in the mornin', an' Throosh, edgin' nearer and nearer to the boundthry sthونه, saw a little gyard shippin' inland an'

heard a great fluther ov wings a minyit later. Then he sthup up very proud an' simple, an' the King looked for his ring.

"For we must hurry," says he. "The dacent Banshee her is losht out ov the wather," says he. "An' so—put on that bridal dhress," says he.

Very close to the sthونه—a fluther—a little green fairy among all their grey, and a great hep ov a dhress lyin' on the sthones.

"The top ov the mornin' to ye, King Cruskeen, Alanna," says Throosh, caperin' off well behind the boundthry.

Well, such murther niver you heard. The Banshee keenin' an' the King roarin', an' the wather fairies howlin', an' onst out ov the night Throosh thought he saw a face lookin' so lovely 'twould make you afeard, and heard a wummun's laff.

"Where is Fiona?" roared the King. "An' how did ye git down alone?"

"She shud be in the Rath be now," says Throosh, says he. "I wint down in yer pipe, Cruskeen Alanna, since I had no power to go alone. An' I thank ye kindly for the help. There, now. Ye know ye have no power over me beyant yer own place." An' with that he cot two gyards, nate and clever, an' an ould wather fairy that was dhryin' up, an' barginned them for his comrades below. So that befoure he wint they were brought up, an' let go home to the Rath.

"Don't be disappointin' the dacent Banshee then," says Throosh, laffin', "that hasn't a death screech left in her now. But marry one of thim colleens," says he, "that's used to yer ugliness." An' with a light fluther Throosh was gone.

"An' ye saved us—ye saved me!" cried Fiona, comin' to him as he flew in. "Oh, what, what can I do for ye, Throosh?"

"Faix, let me be," says Throosh, lookin' skewways at Noreen, "for 'twouldn't do to be too fond of me, Fiona!"

"I suppose they niver noticed ye, ye are so smhall," says Noreen, says she, short like. But she was proud ov him all the time, for there was a shake in her voice an' she filled his pipe for him, an' put her little hand in his.

So there was a great weddin' in the Rath whin Fiona wint to another Rath King ridin' a white horse, an' he half covered with silver an' gould.

Throosh an' Noreen were wed, too, with the King's own ring ov fairy gould.

An' ye wint very quiet like now to the Rath among the hills, whin the thorns blow white in May and the late primmeroses are yelly stars, ye might see the fairies sittin' round in the ring and little Throosh tellin' the story of how he beshted the King of the Loch.

But for the apple it wint from him next day. An' he has niver seen Moira Dhuv since.

THE SONGS OF LABOUR.

IN these days such a phrase as "the songs of labour" is more suggestive of Socialism than of anything else; but it is used here in its natural meaning as indicating the songs that the labourer sings as he works. Sir Laurence Gomme, who has written an interesting article on the subject in the *Cornhill Magazine*, talks of singing as if it expressed a certain joy in labour; but, in reality, it is instinctive. Some people sing when they are very hard pressed or, in the athletic slang of to-day, "extended." Others croon over their task in a manner that is almost automatic. Max Müller has stated the case very clearly: "We know from physiology that under any strong muscular effort it is a relief to the system to let our breath come out strongly and repeatedly, and by that process to let the vocal chords vibrate in different ways." The sounds thus produced are called *clamor concomitans*. Sir Laurence Gomme finds most of his examples in Scotland. Thus the old women used to sing as they were weaving:

My wheelie goes round,
My wheelie goes round,
And my wheelie she casts the band;
It's no the wheelie that has the wyte (blame),
It's my uncanny hand.

Some time ago we gave some examples of Highland milking songs, and a very good one from Lancashire is given here:

Cush-a-cow bonny, come let down your milk,
And I will give you a gown of silk,
A gown of silk and a silver tee,
If you will let down your milk for me.

Beside it is placed a simple churning song from the seventeenth century:

Come, butter, come,
Come, butter, come,
Peter's standing at the gate
Waiting for a butter'd cake,
Come, butter, come.

There are many other examples quoted by Sir Laurence Gomme. They are to the workman what the chanties are to the sailor, but many of them are not, properly speaking, songs of labour. Thus, "I am a jovial tinker" is more of a lengthened

street cry than anything else; so are "Have you any work for a tinker, mistriss?" and the beautiful song of the broom-seller, "New broomes, green broomes, will you buy any?" These

are all interesting as "fragments of earlier civic and country life," but they scarcely come under the heading of labour songs. In fact, they are usually in the mouths of the work-shy.

ON THE GROWTH OF TWO SALMON.

A FEW days ago I received from the Wye some salmon scales for examination. Among them were shoulder scales from two fish caught at the same place, Boughrood Castle, and on the same day, March 28th, 1912. One of these fish weighed 17½ lb. and was 36 in. in length, the other weighed 31 lb. and was 41 in. long. Both, as apparent from their scales, had been growing for precisely the same length of time. The difference in size was so marked that it occurred to me that it would be interesting to apply the result of Herr Knut Dahl's recent discovery to the examination of a scale from each of these fish, so as to ascertain at what period in their lives the difference in size and weight began to manifest itself, and whether the increased rate of growth of the larger fish was continuous.

As the method of investigation suggested by Herr Dahl is quite new, and probably unheard of by most readers, a few words of explanation are desirable. It has long been known that the number of scales on a salmon is constant, and that, except to replace scales accidentally lost, the fish during its life produces no new scales. If, however, a scale is lost or misplaced, its position is filled by a new scale of identically the same size as the old one would have been at the time of replacement. This new scale may easily be recognised, as it shows, up to the time of its production, none of the lines of growth which mark the original scales, and its centre, if a lost scale has been replaced by it, is a simple bony plate. (See Fig. 3.) How this indeterminate new growth exactly occupies the space previously held by the original scale is well shown by an illustration at page 13 of Dahl's "Age and Growth of Salmon and Trout in Norway," published a few months ago by the Salmon and Trout Association.

Herr Dahl examined for his purpose the scales of nearly four thousand salmon, and also those of an enormous number of trout. The results are given in the work just cited. He argued that, as the number of scales is constant, new scales of similar size take the place of the lost ones, and that as, except for this, the salmon retains its scales from the time when they are first produced until its death, the scales must grow with the growth of the fish. He considered that the growth of each scale was probably exactly proportioned to the growth of the fish, and by the examination and measurement of the large number of fish mentioned, he has left no room for doubt that in length, at any rate, the scale growth is so nearly proportionate to the total growth that any error is negligible. If this is the case for length, where the growth of the parts not covered by scales, namely, the head and tail, has to be taken into account, it seems fairly certain, although, so far as I know, no extended series of measurements has yet been made to prove it, that the breadth of the scales also remains proportionate to the growth of the fish. The whole girth being scale-covered, deductions as to girth from scale measurement should, I think,

be even more to be depended upon than deductions as to length. I have accordingly applied both measurements to the scales now under review.

Fig. 1 is an enlargement of a scale from the 17½ lb. fish. As the measurements are proportional, the degree of enlargement is of no moment. (It is about fifteen diameters.) Note first the age marks on the scale. The nucleus—that is, the minute flat bony plate from which the scale started to grow, and the whole scale for the first three months or so of the fish's life—is where the lines A and A' intersect. The part of the scale where the dark lines show is the front part, and was enclosed in a pocket in the skin. These dark lines represent the ridges on the upper surface of the scale. The scale having been photographed by transmitted light, the ridges show up as dark rings. The part of the scale on which these rings do not show was exposed, and has worn, so they are no longer visible. The

letters on the margin refer to the points at which the lines drawn from them touch the lines A and A'. During the first year of parr life, this scale grew from the nucleus with which it started to the points B b b'. The growth from B b b' to C c c' also took place in fresh water during the second year of the fish's life. Soon after the beginning of its third year the fish entered the sea, and the result of the richer feeding there is shown, partly by the wider spacing of the lines then added to the scale, but more clearly by the distance between C and D compared to that between A and B, and B and C. It will be observed that the last seven lines, those next D, are closer together than the other thirty-one between C and D. These show the smaller proportionate growth made in winter, and form what is known as the winter band. Parr in their first year are known not to feed at all in the winter months and only very sparingly in their second year. It is probable that this habit remains through life irrespective of the amount of food available. The growth between C c c' and D d d' is that in the third year of the salmon's life. Between D d d' and E e e'

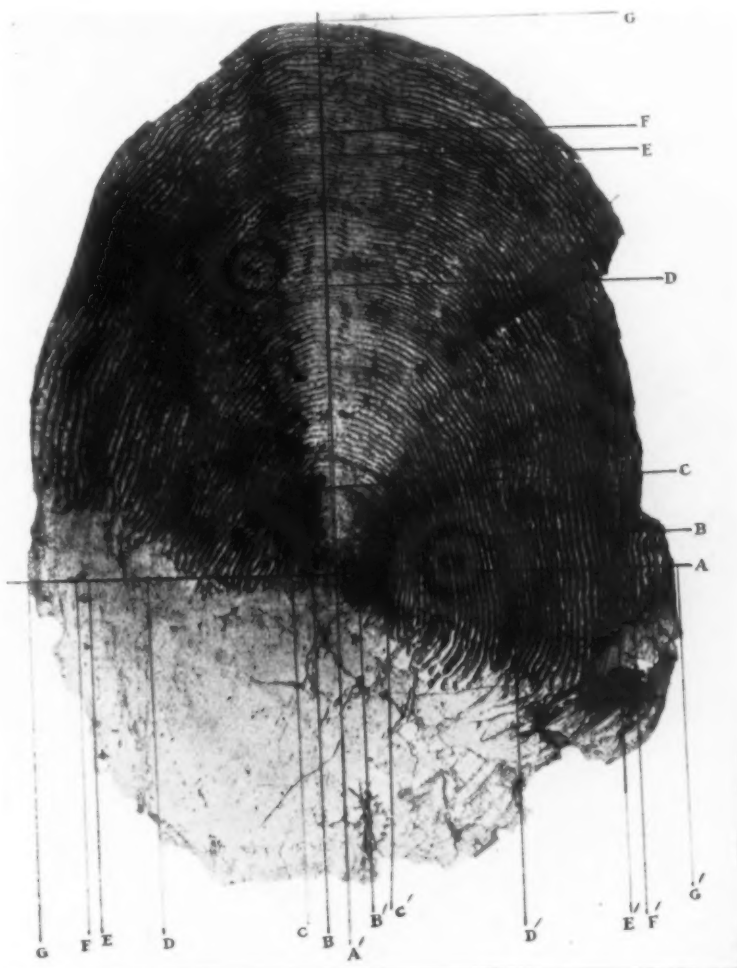


FIG. 1.—SHOULDER SCALE OF 17½ LB. SALMON × 15 DIAMETERS.

(Note.—Edge broken in handling.)

is observed the growth added in the fourth year of the fish's life. If it had been caught in, or before, the autumn of that year, it would have been known as a grilse. The lines between D d d' and E e e' are similar to those between C c c' and D d d', and the winter band of several lines closer together than the others is again shown, although it is not very clear, except on the sides of the scale.

If this salmon had been captured just after the completion of the winter band at D it would have been described as a *small spring* fish. It grew, however, for a fifth year, putting on the lines between E e e' and G g g'. It had now completed another winter band, and then entered the river and was captured as what is known as a *large spring* salmon.

Now to apply Dahl's discovery. I have already stated that the degree of magnification of the scale makes no difference, nor does the measure applied to it to find the proportionate

growth of its various parts. I have taken 1-64th inch as the unit of measurement. Between the nucleus and B there are 15 of these units; from the nucleus to C, 35; to D, 113; to E, 153; and to G, at the end of the long diameter of the scale, 215.

Now, as we know that the fish was 36in. long, the 215 units from the nucleus to G represents 36in., and a simple calculation then shows that this fish, when a part of one year old, was 2½in. long; as a smolt entering the sea it was 5½in. long; at the end of its third year of life it was 19in. long; and as a small spring fish, four years old, it was 25½in. long.

To arrive at the girth round the shoulders on the line from which this scale was taken, I take the measures from the points b to b¹, 18 units; c to c¹, 38 units; d to d¹, 143 units; e to e¹, 208 units; and g to g¹, 255 units. It must be borne in mind that the letters refer to the points at which the lines drawn from them touch the line A. In this case, however, we do not know what the actual girth of the fish was at any time; but a salmon at 7lb. weight is about 27in. long and has a shoulder girth of about 12½in.

The point F on the scale would correspond to a length of 27in. on the fish, so the points f, f¹ at the intersection of the same line of growth upon which F lies with the cross diagonal A will show a probable girth of 12½in. to base calculations on. The girth, therefore, works out at 1½in. at one year, 2½in. at two years, 8½in. at three years, 12in. at four years, and 14½in. at the time of capture.

Fig. 2 shows a scale taken from an identical position on the 31lb. fish, but in this case the enlargement is only to eleven diameters. The same letters as before indicate similar points, and similar calculations show the lengths of the fish to have been as follows: At one year, 3in.; at two years, 5½in.; at three years, 19in.; at four years, 31in.; and when caught we know it was 41in. long. The girth at the shoulders was: At one year, 1½in.; at two years, 2½in.; at three years, 8½in.; at four years, 13½in.; and when caught 18½in.

From the above measurements we learn that as a smolt the 17½lb. fish was rather the larger of the two.



FIG. 2.—SCALE OF A 31LB. SALMON × 11 DIAMETER.

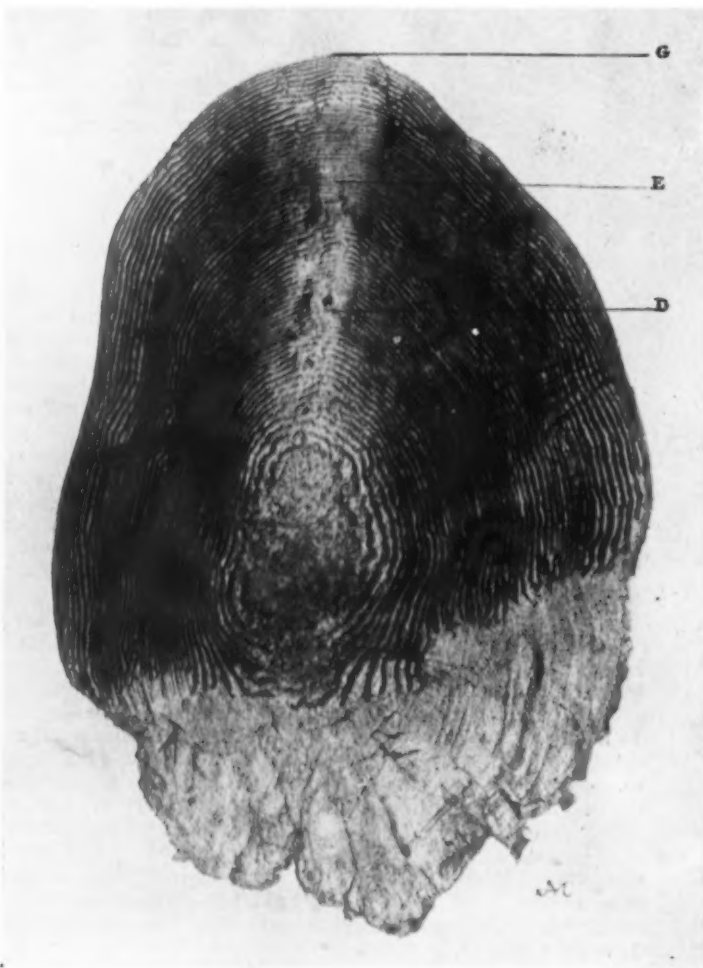


FIG. 3.—REPLACEMENT SCALE OF 17½LB. SALMON WITH INDEFINITE CENTRAL GROWTH.

Dahl has found that, as a rule, the strongest smolts produce the quickest growing fish. In this instance such was clearly not the case. Both were identical in length at the end of the first sea year, namely, 19in.; but the 31lb. fish was already fatter than the other. At the end of another year this fish had gone well ahead, for in its fourth year it added almost twelve inches to its length and 5in. to its shoulder girth, as against additions of 6½in. in length and 3½in. in girth by the smaller fish. In the last year the smaller fish added half an inch more to its length than the larger one, but the latter increased its girth by 4½in. as against 2½in. added by the former. The increase in size of the big fish would no doubt have been greater in the last year had it not, when a small spring fish, at the end of its fourth year, entered a river and spawned; so that when it returned to the sea a year later, in the following spring, it had to recover from the kelt condition before it could begin to grow again. If it had not spawned, I presume that it would have attained a weight of from 35lb. to 38lb. as a large spring fish last year, but it spent all 1910 in fresh water without progressing in size at all. That is why I have spoken of these two salmon as having been growing for precisely the same time, instead of saying that they were of the same age. The larger fish was six years old and the other five, but each had fed two years in fresh water as parr, and three years only in the sea.

The spawning mark is a very interesting one. It is not exactly like any of those I have seen illustrated, for no filling in of worn patches is shown, and the ridges follow on just as if the fish had never spawned. The kelt scale must have been as perfect in outline as that of a clean fish. Scale growth before spawning finished at the end of one season and seems to have started again regularly from the same point at the beginning of the next season but one. I have often wondered whether such a scale would show a spawning mark at all, but here it is quite clear as a dark line all round the scale at the outer edge of the winter band at E e e¹. This line represents a thickening of what was then the scale edge, which is clearly shown by the photograph, though it entirely escaped detection under the microscope. Now that I know it to be there, I can see it under the microscope, but I should never have suspected its existence if I had not photographed the scale.

There is nothing, so far as our present knowledge extends, to show why one fish should have grown so much faster than the other. The even spacing between the ridges shows, or is believed to show, that their growth was very regular during each annual feeding period, except that in each case, in the fourth year, a few ridges closer together than the others seem to show that the food supply failed them to a certain extent in the summer. This probably occurred to the larger fish early in June and to the smaller towards the end of July. Possibly they then approached the coast with some idea, or instinct, of spawning as grilse.

I have taken no note of the number of the ridges on the scales. When scales were first studied, the exact number of ridges was supposed to be of importance, and Mr. P. D. Mallock went so far as to evolve a theory that every salmon from birth to death added exactly sixteen of these ridges to each of its scales each year. I could never see that he proved his theory. In fact, the illustrations in his own book seemed to me to disprove it, and now that Miss Philippa Esdaile—See "Memoirs of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society," Vol. LVI. (1912), No. 3—has shown that the number of the ridges varies very much on scales from different parts of the same fish, Mr. Mallock's theory cannot possibly hold water. If it was sound, we should have the anomaly of different parts of the same salmon being of different ages. It is very useful to know within about what limits the number of ridges added in each year varies, but meantime I consider that the number of ridges between the winter bands is useful only to help one to recognise the position of an obscure winter band (for the bands are not by any means always so clear as illustrations from chosen

specimens might lead one to believe) or to determine roughly the time of year at which the fish entered the sea or returned to the river. It must be understood that I refer merely to the number of the ridges, and not to their relative positions. That one scale may show twenty of these ridges between two winter bands, and another twenty-five, is of no importance; but if I found, say, forty, I would know that I had probably missed seeing a spawning mark, as a fish could hardly have put on forty ridges in one year; whereas, if I had missed seeing a winter band, the number of ridges would hardly have been under fifty, as the result of ordinary uninterrupted sea life for two years.

Fig. 3 is a renewed scale from the same 17½ lb. fish removed from a position close to the scale already illustrated. The original scale has evidently been accidentally lost soon after the smolt went to the sea. Its position has been filled by the unlined growth in the centre of the scale. At this period the fish's growth would be very rapid indeed, and I calculate that in order to keep pace with it the area of each scale must double in less than a fortnight. Before the bony mass secreted to replace the lost scale had time to harden a much larger scale was already required, and fresh material was hurriedly added to the edges of the scale to keep pace with the growth of the skin pocket which held it. That is how I account for the wide spacing between the ridges surrounding the growth representing the original scale.

It is interesting to compare the growth of this scale (Fig. 3) between D and G with the growth of Fig. 1 between the same points. In all essential particulars it will be found to be identical.

J. A. MILNE.

THE TIME OF THE SINGING OF BIRDS.

ALTHOUGH one swallow does not make a summer, one chiff-chaff certainly makes spring, for he is the first of the warblers to return. Although from a musical standpoint his song is limited and poor, yet it is sharp, clear and arresting, as a herald's cry should be, when from the top of a tall tree he blazons forth the news that spring is here. Yellow primrose and golden daffodil may have already whispered the welcome tidings, but it is the chiff-chaff who rings up the curtain when Nature's spring season of grand opera commences. Immediately after the chiff-chaff's arrival every copse and hedgerow will echo and re-echo with the willow-wren's plaintive song, which cannot be confounded with that of any other bird when once identified. In plumage the willow-wren and chiff-chaff are alike, and the birds are only to be distinguished at first sight by the colour of their legs—pinkish brown in the willow-wren and dark brown in the chiff-chaff. In numerical strength the willow-wren far outnumbers the other warblers, except, perhaps, the whitethroat, who gossips and chatters and scolds himself into prominence as he slips in and out of hedgerows, revealing the characteristic whitethroat at every twist of his lithe body.

The whitethroat believes in snatching a fearful joy out of life. He will hurl himself skywards with passionate rapture, his heart surcharged with gladness which is flung forth to the sun and wind in wild outbursts of song, the bird meanwhile bounding and rebounding in mid-air as if he were tossed up and down by some invisible racket. In individual birds the song varies considerably as regards quality, but the riotous joy of the whitethroat is at all times contagious. The lesser whitethroat takes life more seriously; he is shy and skulking in

his habits, though his loud, rattling call-note—similar in its beginnings to the chaffinch's song—may often be heard in gardens and hedgerows, or wherever the undergrowth is thickest. Often this rattle gradually merges into the song proper, which is softer than that of the whitethroat, though not inferior in quality. Both the whitethroats are understudies of the garden-warbler and blackcap; the same motif runs through the songs of all four, but it is in the blackcap that the gift of musical expression reaches its highest pitch.

This little group of warblers, more, perhaps, than any other birds, "add a glory to summer"; and if we reckon in the soft sighing of the more locally distributed wood-warbler, the chorus is complete. It is possible to live and be happy without nightingales; but take away from one's daily walks the garrulous and often irascible whitethroats, with their allies, and the wayside would be dull indeed.

Chiff-chaffs, willow-wrens and wood-wrens all build dome-shaped nests, either upon, or close to, the ground. The normal wood-wren rejects feathers as a lining for its cradle;

but eleven years ago I found a nest of this species entirely lined with feathers, and, curiously enough, in 1911 I again found one in the same spot, partially lined with the same material. I had not looked for wood-warblers' nests during the interval, though well aware of their presence in this particular spot. It may be that this abnormal habit of using a feather lining had been partially transmitted to the offspring of one pair of birds, but is now dying out. The four other pairs of wood-warblers regularly breeding in that one small area built normal nests lined with grass. The wood-wren's nest is difficult to locate before the young are hatched; but when engaged in feeding their hungry brood, the old birds become very tame and



E. L. Turner.

GARDEN-WARBLES AND IMPATIENT OFFSPRING. Copyright.

confiding. The behaviour of a brood of six little ones I watched last year was very amusing. They had reached the most delightful stage of their existence, being yellow feathery balls just ready to fly. They sat in two rows, an upper and a lower. The lower three were invariably fed by the parents, after which the top row immediately wriggled downwards, hoisting the lower row on to their backs, and thus awaited *their* turn. As the parents made on an average one visit every four or five minutes, this shuffling and change of position was constant and regular, so that the active brood got plenty of exercise and very little rest during the day. When alarmed, all six nestlings crouched in a slanting position, and presented a uniform dull olive green surface which, so long as they closed their eyes, might easily have been mistaken for an inanimate collection of leaves; but curiosity sooner or later induced the birds to open first one eye and then another, and so they betrayed their presence.

Blackcaps, garden-warblers and whitethroats place their frail, cup-shaped nests in any tangle, shrub or hedgerow. The males of the first two species bring the coarser bits of material and build the rough structure, while the females arrange the interior and carefully weave in the fine lining, giving that minute attention to detail characteristic of the sex in all household furnishing. The chiff-chaff's nest depicted here was in rather an unusual position, between two palings, bare and exposed to view as in the photograph when I first found it, but well concealed behind a rank growth of nettles and coarse



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WILLOW-WREN.

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THE LESSER WHITETHROAT'S METHOD.

grass long before the young were hatched. During the month I had this pair of chiff-chaffs under observation I did not see the male bird take any share either in brooding over or in feeding the young; nor did he refrain from his ceaseless "chiff, chaff" or show any sympathy with his mate's terrible distress whenever I approached their home, whereas she, in her solicitude, threw herself at my feet and feigned injury, as all species of warblers will do under like conditions. With regard to the other members of the group, I have always found both sexes sharing the work; and as it is never safe to generalise from one instance alone, I hope my callous chiff-chaff was an exception to the rule. I have, at any rate, seen other chiff-chaffs building, when both male and female divided the labour.

The lesser whitethroat sometimes performs curious gymnastic feats worthy of a bearded tit when feeding its young. This usually happens when the nest is placed low down in coarse undergrowth. The bird grasps a thick blade of grass with both feet and literally stands on end while she thrusts food down the throat of the young, after which she stumbles through the tangled herbage for a considerable distance before taking flight. Both the whitethroats and also the blackcap and garden-warbler begin several nests, which are more or less completed but never used, a habit which reminds one of the so-called "cock's nests" of the common wren. But as the warblers' nests are frail and inconspicuous, these first attempts are often overlooked. In one small plantation near Hickling Broad, which, owing to its limited area, was somewhat

overcrowded with warblers, the number of unfinished nests outnumbered the finished by quite three to one.

The food of all these warblers consists largely of insect larvæ, and it is amusing to watch one or other of them suddenly break off in the midst of his song, stand daintily poised on tip-toe, seize a juicy caterpillar or two, and then resume his singing. The wood-warbler generally haunts oak trees and devours swarms of that

particular larva which infests oak plantations. His yellow plumage harmonises completely with the colour of the young oak shoots, and the pretty shining of his wings as he rounds off his trill reminds one of quivering leaves. The young are fed on a varied diet of insects and their larvæ. But we would like to know more minute details with regard to the food of each species, and whether or not it has any relation to the numerical superiority of the willow-wren. There is an opening for wide research in this matter. In the autumn they love soft fruits and berries, such as those of the honeysuckle. During the more leisurely autumn migration there are certain elderberry bushes bordering a well-defined migration route which swarm with warblers early in the morning and, indeed, during the day. Sometimes apparently the same birds hang round these bushes for days before gradually wending their way further South. By and by only one or two stragglers are left, and soon these also take their departure and the pageant of spring and summer is at an end.

E. L. TURNER.

BRITISH BIRDS AND . . . THEIR OBSERVERS.

THE activity and zeal of the very large numbers of observers who are now engaged in watching birds in various parts of the British Islands is truly astonishing. Our knowledge of the habits of birds has certainly increased amazingly since the beginning of the last century, when comparatively little was known and recorded even of fairly well-known species.

White of Selborne set an excellent example during the eighteenth century, and the publication of his famous book

has been undoubtedly a great stimulus to discovery and observation ever since. But how slow, comparatively, was the progress made during the first half of the last century may be appreciated by a reference to the works of the various famous ornithologists of that period, from Montagu onwards. The pace has quickened wonderfully during the last thirty years, and

where there were a dozen observers at work during the fifties and sixties of the last century, there are now hundreds. Interest in bird-life is, in fact, extraordinarily keen at the present time, and shows every prospect of growing with the years. The use of the camera is, of course, a wonderful aid to discovery, and the keener and more enterprising of photographers have within the last few years contributed greatly to the increase of knowledge. Here is one notable instance: Miss E. L. Turner, whose beautiful camera work has so often delighted readers of COUNTRY LIFE, published not long since a photograph showing a stonechat seated on the summit of a gorse bush holding a lizard in its bill. Until the publication of that photograph it was absolutely unknown to writers on British birds that this chat made a quarry of the common lizard, so often found in stretches of gorse covert.

In face of the immense growth of observation now to be seen in all parts of the country, it is not surprising to find the list of British birds being rapidly added to. Last year was a very busy one, and a good many fresh records were established. Here are some of them: The collared fly-catcher, American pipit, Blythe's reed-warbler, Alpine ring-ousel, Siberian slender-billed nut-cracker, pine-bunting, thrush-nightingale or sprosser, slender-billed curlew and North American peregrine falcon. The collared fly-catcher, two specimens of which were taken near Winchelsea less than a year ago, is a very handsome little bird which is found in Middle and Southern Europe and Western Asia. Its northern range barely reaches the South of Sweden, while it is found, on its southern migration, in North-East Africa. In March and April it is frequently to be seen among the palm groves and bush of Lower Egypt and Arabia. This charming bird is manifestly a cousin of our English pied fly-catcher, but is handsomer and more strikingly marked.

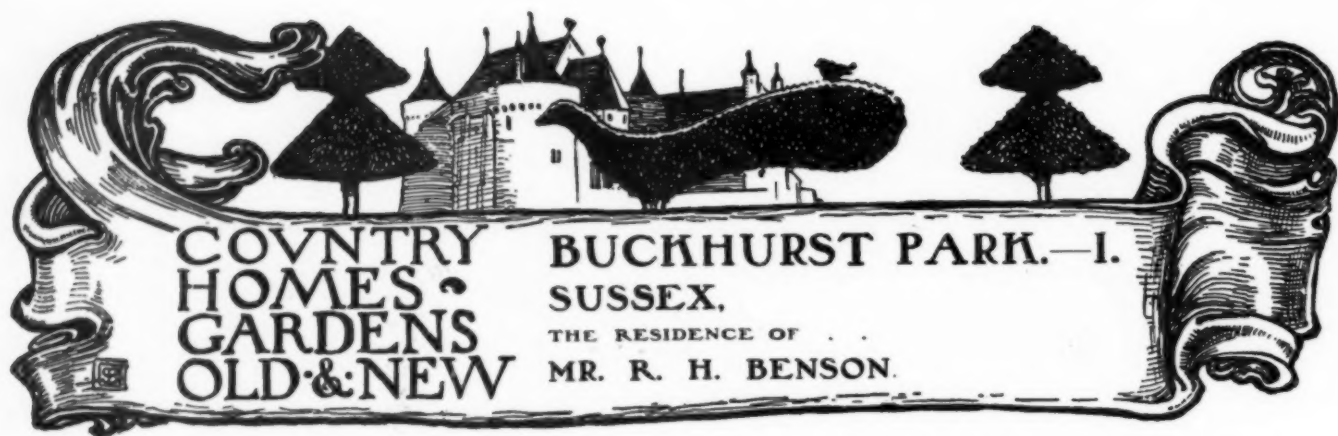
H. A. B.



E. L. Turner.

WHITETHROAT, DECIDING PRECEDENCE.

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WITHIN the area of the extensive domain of Buckhurst, in Withyham parish, the Sackvilles have had a home for seven centuries. Although it has been somewhat eclipsed by such glorious places as Knole and Drayton, which came subsequently to members of the family, and although the original building has long been deserted for one on another site, yet the present house and grounds offer great amenity. Delightful as are the South Downs, yet the choicest portion of Sussex is that which crowns the warm sandy ridge whence the rivulets of Medway water descend to the Kentish border. It is a tumbled, hilly district of ancient forest, where, though, of old, a great area was given up to the chase, there was enough rich, well-watered, cultivable land to induce early occupation, and in due course to support in moderate affluence large local landowners who built well for themselves and their dependents. Such villages as Hartfield and Withyham, nestling below the forest ridge of Ashdown, retain notable if humble examples of old English building craft. Picturesque homesteads are seen sheltering in hollows or standing bravely on knolls, while

the tall gate-houses of Bolebroke and Buckhurst still proudly rear their turrets and pinnacles to show us how the knights of early Tudor days planned the most outstanding feature of their domiciles. Both have been homes of the Sackvilles, and both have fallen from their high estate since changing taste and times have gradually raised what was once a humble building to the headship of the great property. In the matter of architecture Buckhurst Park only begins after old Buckhurst has ended, while a large part of its mass is, unfortunately, in the neo-Gothic style of the first half of the nineteenth century. Recent developments, however, both of house and garden, have subordinated the poor work of Humphrey Repton, so that the general effect is now altogether pleasurable, while there are particular points and details that satisfy the most critical taste and afford delight to the lover of the beautiful in its varied manifestations. Mr. and Mrs. Benson's wide and informed outlook on to the world of art has made Buckhurst Park a treasure-house of furniture and pictures, textiles and ceramics, while the balanced and ordered progression of the generously designed and admirably laid out formal and wild gardens



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THE EAST BUILDING, OLD BUCKHURST.

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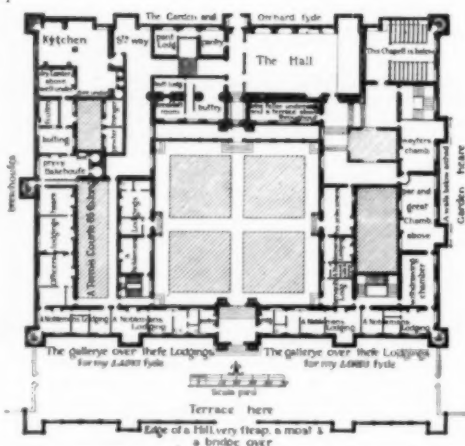
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THE TOWER OF OLD BUCKHURST.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

affords a rich and apt foreground and middle distance to the far stretching distance which unrolls itself beyond the two thousand acres of Buckhurst Park far up the heights of Ashdown and along the windings of three valleys.

Seventeenth century genealogists, freely interpreting some extracts from Ordericus Vitalis, laid down that when William the Norman won England, the Lordship of Buckhurst, among other lands, fell to the lot of his cup-bearer, Robert, known as Pincerna from his office as well as by the territorial name of de Dene. Among his comrades in arms was Herbrand de Salkavilla who also obtained certain English lands as a reward. Both he and his eldest son, however, still made Normandy their chief home. But a younger son remained in the conquered country, leading a gay and active life under Rufus and Henry, but closing his days as a weary and saddened monk amid the anarchy of Stephen's reign. Ere this, however, he had raised up lusty sons to succeed him, of whom the eldest, Sir Jordan de Sackville, married a great-grand-daughter of the cup-bearer, and she, after her brother's death, put her husband into possession of five manors, including Buckhurst, which has ever since remained in their line. The home of the family, posted well above the watery meads near the church of Withyham, is described in the inquisition held after Sir Jordan's death as a well-built dwelling-house. Here son followed sire for many generations, each busying himself with local affairs when he was not fighting under the banner of the Plantagenet kings. Such was Sir Thomas Sackville, eleventh in descent from Herbrand, who was with Henry V. in France, and took to wife Margaret Dalyngrigge, daughter to his neighbour the Lord of Bolebroke. His brother-in-law, Sir John Dalyngrigge, must have been an older man, for it was from Richard II. that he obtained licence to embattle his great castle of Bodiam, built from the spoils of war. Sir John's son ended his line, and it has been generally held that through Sir Thomas' wife Bolebroke then went to the Sackvilles. But a recent writer in the "Sussex Archaeological Collections" shows that the Sackvilles failed in the fifteenth century to make good their claim to the manor, and that from a different branch of the Dalyngrigges it passed to other owners until Elizabeth was Queen. The gate-tower, therefore—a delightful building



THORPE'S PLAN FOR OLD BUCKHURST.

of brick and stone in the manner of Hampton Court, and no doubt dating from Henry VIII.'s day—cannot have been built by a Sackville, as was the somewhat similar and contemporary building at Buckhurst, which Sir John Sackville must have erected shortly before the great divorce case agitated the land. He laid the foundation of a huge development to the family fortunes by his marriage with Margaret Boleyn, aunt to Queen Anne. She, however, must have died well before triumph and tragedy in quick succession were her niece's fortune, for Sir John took as his second wife Anne Torrell, and as her initial together with the pomegranate of Spain appears on the tower, both marriage and tower must date from a time when Catherine was still King Henry's honoured and undisputed wife. Buckhurst tower is of stone, and the corner

finials and staircase parapet rise to a height of some fifty feet. Three-light windows with arched heads admit the eastern sun to the upper and lower chambers, that are placed above the arched entrance. This remains perfect on the east side, but the corresponding arch towards the west is blocked up. Towards the east, between arch and lower window, are three heraldic panels set diamond-wise, and with hoods, or drip mouldings, over them, having the rose and the fleur-de-lys sculptured in their ends. Together with other emblems the three panels each have the Sackville arms, and the central shield is flanked by the letters I and A for Sir John and Anne his wife. The pomegranate is not here, but appears in the hood moulding of both the windows above.

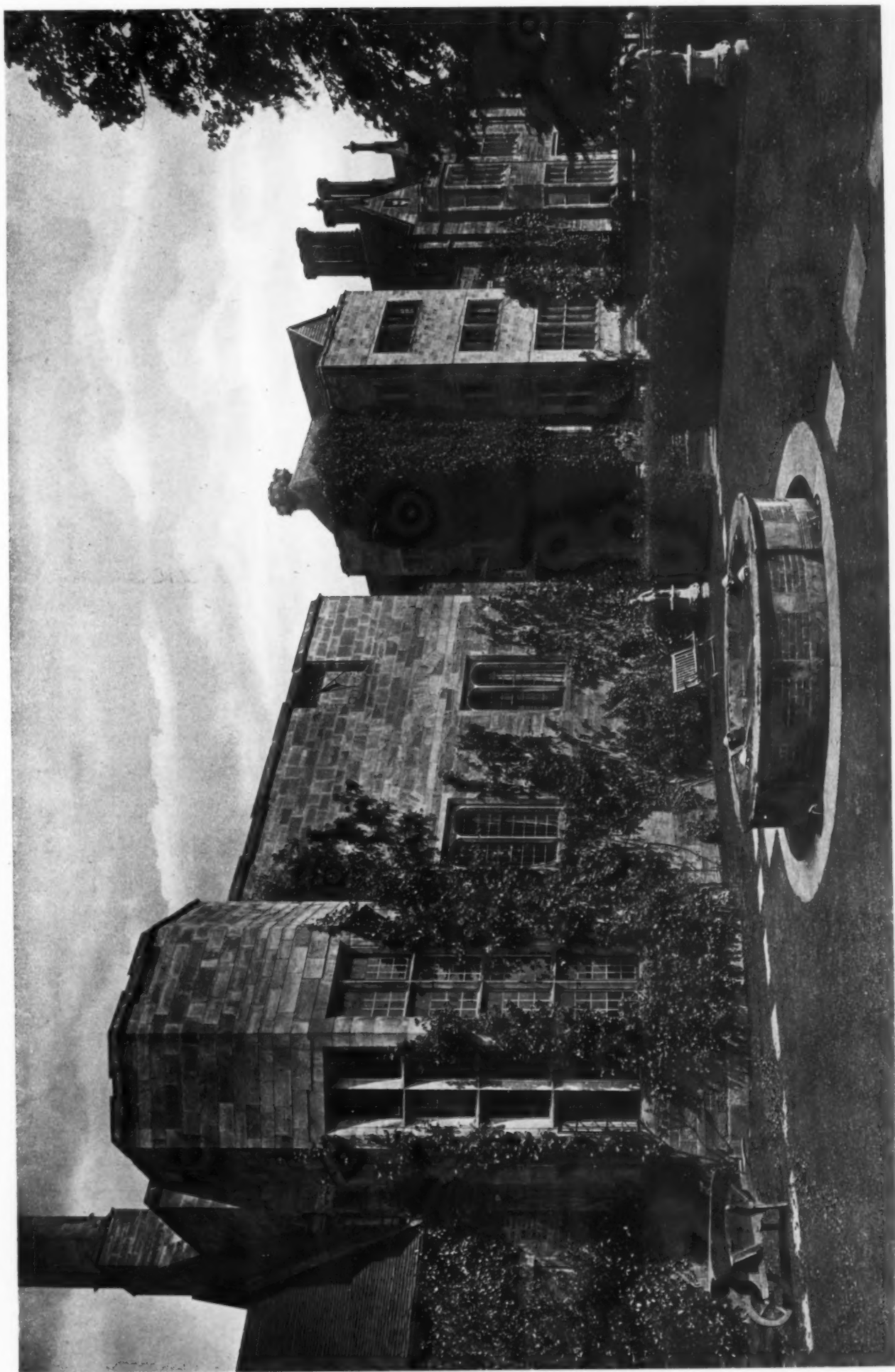
That Sir John Sackville was the builder of this tower and of certain adjacent buildings that have now disappeared we know from his will, wherein he leaves to Dame Anne if she remain a widow the use for her life of the "New Chambers between the Tower and the Barne," together with "all the stuffe" that is in them, and with free access for her and her servants to the kitchen and the garden, the tower and the chapel, the latter being approached through the "gallarie." For the first year of her widowhood she is also to retain the tower-rooms themselves which Sir John describes as "over the entrie where I doe moste comonlie lye." Sir John was certainly in a financial position to improve and augment his ancestral home, for Leland



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A PEEP AT THE LAVENDER GARDEN.

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IN FRONT OF THE MUSIC ROOM.

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EAST END OF THE SUNK GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

tells us "The auncientest house of the Sachevilles that now livith is at Bukhurste yn Southesax, by the Forest of Water-down, a 2 or 3 miles from Rotherfeld also in Southesax. This Sacheville is a man of a 300^{ll} land by the yere." In days when country gentlemen supported their large households almost entirely upon the produce of such portions of their land as they kept in demesne, and when payments in specie were few and

small, three hundred pounds was decidedly a large rental. This, however, was to be enormously increased by Sir John's son, Sir Richard, who so well knew how money was to be made under the Tudors that Naunton in his "Fragmenta Regalia" assures us that people called him "Fill-Sack by reason of his great wealth." This play upon the family name, however, seems previously to have been used by his father as a rebus,



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LOOKING EAST IN THE SUNK GARDEN.

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WEST END OF THE SOUTH TERRACE

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THE BOAT-HOUSE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

for the writer on Old Buckhurst in the "Sussex Archaeological Collections" speaks of one of the devices on the tower as representing "a ram's head and oak leaves, over an object which looks like a cap, with stout seams on its edge, or sack filled—perhaps a rebus for Sackville."

Sir Richard Sackville never held high office, but had varied and continuous employment—all, no doubt, of a profitable kind—under Henry VIII. and his three children. He was one of those reliable and accommodating officials who, like Mildmay and Williams, grew wealthy from their connection with the business of dealing with the estates of the despoiled monasteries, churches and chantries under Henry and Edward, yet retained

their places and their profits under Mary, and were thus in a position to still further improve their fortunes under Elizabeth. But Sir Richard was by no means a mere time-server or money-grubber, but a first-rate business man with wide sympathies, both social and intellectual. Although he tells us that before he was fourteen years old his tutor "drove him with feare of beating from all love of learning," yet it is he who urged upon Ascham to write his "Schoolmaster" and who put his grandson, Robert, to be educated with Ascham's son. His numerous employments would make residence in London frequent, but when he was in the country, Buckhurst was his favourite home, and here, in 1536, his son Thomas, afterwards first Earl of Dorset,



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ACROSS THE JAPANESE ISLANDS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

was born. Of him there will be much to say when Knole is the theme, but as the subject of his connection with Buckhurst plunges us at once into the region of uncertainty and controversy, his early career must be shortly surveyed here. The article on him in the "Dictionary of National Biography" is by Mr. Sidney Lee, who deals admirably with his literary position. As a young man between twenty-one and twenty-five he blossomed out as a poet and a dramatist. This was in the early days of Elizabeth's reign, and he is, therefore, one of the pioneers of a great literary age. Those portions of "A Myrror for Magistrates" and of the "Tragedy of Gorboduc," that we owe to his pen, arrest the attention as much from their date as from their excellence, and Mr. Lee says of his "Induction" to the former work that "It has no rival among the poems issued between Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales' and Spencer's 'Faerie Queene.'" But while retaining his friendship with literary men, he himself soon became absorbed in politics and Court life. His grandmother had been great-aunt to the Queen, who recognised the cousinship and liked his presence about her. Life at court resulted in an expenditure of which the prudent "Fill Sack" must have strongly disapproved. "Extravagant habits led to pecuniary difficulties, and, in order to correct his 'immoderate courses' he made about 1563 a foreign tour, passing through France to Italy. At Rome an unguarded avowal of protestantism involved him in fourteen days' imprisonment. While still in the city news of his father's death—on 21 April, 1566—reached him, and he hurried home to assume control of a vast inheritance." How can this quotation from Mr. Lee possibly be reconciled with his assertion that "He resided in early life at Buckhurst, Sussex, where he employed John Thorpe to rebuild the manor-house between 1560 and 1565"? His father was then still alive and he was impecunious



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IRIS KÄMPFERI.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

and abroad. Even after he succeeded in 1566 we hear nothing of residence at, or the rebuilding of, Buckhurst. Such letters as remain are dated from London, from Sheen, or from Horsley, at all of which he had residences. The only possible allusion to Buckhurst at this time is a reference to a hurried ride he took from Sheen into Sussex in 1568, to see what damage had been done by fire at one of his houses, probably the Priory at Lewes, and what action Lord St. John was taking at another, where there was a disputed ownership of certain lands, perhaps at Buckhurst. Beyond this there is no surviving mention of it until 1605, when he writes to Cecil, "I go now . . . for 3 or 4 daies to Buchurst where I was not these 7 yerres." At that time Knole had become his chief seat; before that, Horsley was his favourite rather than Buckhurst. This view is certainly borne out by a comparison of the existing remains at Old Buckhurst, with Thorpe's surviving plan—there is no resemblance whatever between them. The plan, then belonging to Lord Warwick, was known to Horace Walpole, who alludes to the building as "an immense pile." It is now with the



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THE OLD ENTRANCE TOWER, BOLEBROKE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

other Thorpe drawings in the Soane Museum, and a copy of it at Buckhurst Park is here reproduced. It is valuable as showing how an Elizabethan architect proposed that one of her great men should house himself; but it is quite certain that it does not represent a house so completed. It is a great parallelogram, with one large central court and several subsidiary ones. It is well supplied with the then fashionable galleries, and it should be noted that these are termed respectively, "for my Lord Syde" and "for my Lady's Syde," which proves that the plan was not made before 1567, when Thomas Sackville was created Lord Buckhurst. The mediæval arrangement of a great hall with dais and oriel at one end, and entered at the other through screens, beyond which are the treble doors of pantry, buttery and kitchen passage, was retained by Thorpe, but it is made to fit in with the complete symmetrical setting that Italy had dictated. It is clear, also, that the entrance tower was to be decked with the classic orders superimposed in the manner of Longleat, Kirby and Wollaton. It could, therefore, have had no resemblance either in plan or appearance to the existing house. It would seem that Thorpe, like many of his ambitious brethren of all periods, planned to sweep away the old house and replace it by a far grander one in the fashion of his day. This Lord Buckhurst can never have carried out; but it is possible that he may have made certain additions, and it is noticeable that at the south end of the long building that lies east of the gate-house there is a two-storeyed square bay of the same shape as those in Thorpe's plan, and showing the details usual in his day. But the rest

of this building—of which the gable near the north end, but facing just opposite the gate tower, is illustrated—must be, judging from the shape of the arches in the lower stone storey, and the character of the mouldings of the upper timber storey, at least as early as the gatehouse itself. This building may have formed the east side of a quadrangle of domestic buildings occupying the level plateau, while the houses of office, so extensive in mediæval days, lay down the slope westward of the tower, where numerous old foundations have been found.

Too little, however, remains to justify dogmatism, and a miniature picture of it included in "A Map or Survey of the Park of Buckhurst and Stoneland, parts of the Barony of Buckhurst in the County of Sussex, drawn by Thomas Marsh, Gentleman Auditor and Surveyor of Lands and Estates of Lord Thomas Baron of Buckhurst, the nine and thirtieth and fortieth year of Queen Elizabeth 1598," adds to rather than lessens the puzzle. There is shown (within the space of half an inch certainly, and yet so neatly and carefully drawn as to imply some degree of accuracy) a bird's-eye view of the house. There are no barns or other buildings of any sort lying on the slope westward of the entrance arch. That is in the centre of the west side, and that side alone appears finished and entire, the north and south sides being incomplete or destroyed. Lying at some distance, the eastern building is represented much in its present state and is called Buckhurst Lodge. The whole appearance is as of a place that had been patched and added to and that had never been built on a great or regular plan. Thomas Sackville maintained it till his death, for



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TOMB OF THE DORSETS.

"C.L."

he bequeathed the furniture in it to his son, Robert, who became second Earl of Dorset in 1608, but died the following year, after which, if not before, Old Buckhurst certainly went into decay, for his executors are said, apparently on good authority, to have used much of the material for the Sackville Hospital, that still forms such a pleasant feature in East Grinstead—an old Parliamentary borough belonging to and frequently represented by one of the Sackvilles.

Though this family deserted the old home that had come to them through Ella de Dene, yet they retained, consolidated and enlarged the Buckhurst estate, and continued to be buried in their chapel attached to Withyham Church. This chapel, and therefore all the early monuments, was destroyed by fire in 1663, so that the earliest that we find there is by the hand of the foremost sculptor of the reigns of Charles II. and William III. Caius Cibber was largely employed by the great men of the day, for instance, by the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth. Thus, Richard, fifth Earl of Dorset, engaged him to execute a great monument to his favourite little boy, who died in 1675. But two years later the father himself passed away, and the widow and mother had it completed in memory of her double loss. The boy lies on the top. The parents kneel life-sized on the steps, while smaller bas-reliefs of their numerous progeny decorate the sides. At this time the Sackvilles had no habitation in or near Withyham. Old Buckhurst was mostly gone, and Bolebroke, which was probably added to and certainly kept up by the third Earl, had gone to his widow and daughter. An entry in the 1668 account books states: "The Park lying next aboutt the house of Stoneland lett with 200 dere." Thomas Sackville in his will speaks of "the two parks of Buckhurst and Stoneland," and they remained separately enclosed until eighty years ago. A building is shown within the Stoneland enclosure in Marsh's map which must be the beginning of the present house. It lies half a mile east of Old Buckhurst, and was long known as Stoneland House. Its gardens, lately extended and improved as we have seen, stretch down to the edge of a lake formed by damming up the hollow, where ferns revel in the spray of the cascade. It was already there in 1598, the water from it being led to Buckhurst Mill a little below. But the stream was also then used to impel the machinery of ironworks, which here, as in many other parts of Sussex, were the most profitable county industry. In a return made in 1574 Lord Buckhurst appears as owner of forges in Fletching and in Ashfield, but not in Withyham. Here it was the Baker family that held the forges. They were, all through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, important ironmasters, whose headquarters were Mayfield, but who already in Henry VIII.'s time owned the interesting timber-framed house called Duckins, that lay just outside Stoneland Park, and appear to have held—on lease presumably—Stoneland itself during part of the seventeenth century. The kitchen chimney of the present house is built of narrow bricks of somewhat early date, and so the whole of the long, low kitchen building may, together with certain very thick interior walls, be a remnant of the house of Marsh's map. The next section to this, now also included in the servants' quarters, has good Georgian woodwork and sash windows, while its iron rain-water heads are ornamented with the date 1739 and the ducal coronet that Earl Richard's grandson, Lionel Sackville, had set on his brow nineteen years before. The full extent of his building we cannot tell, for, as Mr. Sutton's "Historical Notes" of Withyham informs us: "in the year 1830, George John Sackville-West, fifth Earl De La Warr, grandfather to the present Earl, had the whole house pulled down with the exception of the rooms already mentioned, and the present house erected by Repton." Later still the two towers on the entrance side were added, and quite recently Mr. Benson, the present tenant, employed Mr. Lutyens to rebuild and extend the north-west wing and make other interior alterations, besides laying out new formal gardens. Some of the annexed illustrations show this work, but others are deferred until next week, when the history of the house and its present amenities will be more fully dealt with. T.

IN THE GARDEN.

NATURE'S POWDER-PUFF.

IN these brilliant blue days of May it would seem as if Dame Nature had been bedecking and bepowdering herself with a lavish hand, transforming all with many and careless touches of her powder-puff. Everywhere her handiwork is seen in the snowy dots and masses that stand out white and glistening among the faint greens and greyish browns of hill and dale, or waving in long sprays of white rosettes against an azure sky. In the hedgerows, fields and hillside are patches of Blackthorn, and ere its pure white petals vanish like

snowflakes on a sunny day the Hawthorns will have burst into flowers of creamy richness. The wild Cherry, the Gean tree of the North, powders the Hazel coppice with its clear transparent white, and through the blue carpet of Wood Hyacinths and wild Parsley, Anemones and dainty Sorrel are sprinkled in delicate design. A great soft mass of whiteness has filtered through the boughs, tufted with bursting green, and "Rawsome," that beautiful but evil-scented Garlic (*Allium ursinum*), clothes wide breadths with its clusters of snowy stars, smothering all else with its glossy leaves. Still, these woods and hedges are but the outer fringe of this vast beauty scheme, and over the vale and village, the manor garden and the farm orchard, the contents of the puff-box have been tossed with the most generous hand.

The blossom of the Plum is over, and the dark stems are dressed with delicate pale green. The graceful drooping pendants of Cherry blooms are slightly tinged with brown as the earnest of future ruddy bunches are forming; but on the lawn and in the shrubbery its more lovely fruitless sister (*Cerasus flore-pleno*) flaunts its greater beauty in double flowers of purest white. Under the magic touch the Pear trees have had showered on them a wealth of snowy glory. Under their spell the sombre village street is changed. Uninteresting square houses are clad in virgin loveliness, prim dwellings wreathed and garlanded with festoons of bridal hue, even the old Yew trees that guard the churchyard gate like dark, sad sentinels lose all their gloominess flanked on either side by the gay masses, their tiny blood red petals bathed in sunshine. The cuckoo has come and the swallows chase each other as they skim over the deep mill-pond, on whose still surface the dazzling white of several boughs is mirrored. Great solitary trees dot the fields and tower above the cottage roofs, where their myriad blooms will descend like summer snow on the deep, dark furrowed ground beneath. Far away the orchards appear white and mysterious, blending with the soft blue haze, until they melt and vanish in the misty distance. The Apple tree buds are swelling, and soon the powder patches will be tinged with rosy rouge, as if Dame Nature was caught blushing at her own great beauty. ROLLO GRAHAME.

THE ROYAL INTERNATIONAL HORTICULTURAL EXHIBITION.

THIS exhibition, which is to be held in the Chelsea Hospital Grounds from May 22nd to May 30th inclusive, promises to be the largest and best of its kind ever held. Already many of the rock and water gardens are well on the way towards completion. The number of cups offered as prizes is larger than has ever been known before, and these include one offered by His Majesty the King for the best exhibit in the show. Orchids will make a wonderful display, and the entries for Carnations are exceptionally good. The rock and water gardens, which will be arranged outdoors, will form a very large feature of the exhibition, and will be both interesting and instructive. Sweet Peas, Roses, pot fruit trees, and greenhouse and stove plants will also be shown in large quantities, many of the leading nurserymen and professional gardeners throughout the country having grown these under glass specially for the exhibition. One tert alone covers an area of three and a-half acres, or twice the floor space of Olympia, and the whole exhibition will be spread over a total of twenty-one acres.

A BEAUTIFUL TULIP.

Those who appreciate flowers of an unusual character should make a note of a beautiful Tulip which has been flowering in a few gardens during the past week. I refer to *Tulipa fosteriana*, a most gorgeous species that I found wild in Bokhara. A few bulbs sent me by a friend last autumn were planted in a sunny border in November, and the result has been most pleasing. The colour of the flowers is rich, glowing scarlet, with a centre of yellow, which in some flowers is flecked with maroon. One blossom in my garden last week was six inches from base to apex, and altogether it is a Tulip that compels admiration even from those who understand nothing of the Tulip family. It is of moderately compact growth. Unfortunately, *Tulipa fosteriana* does not increase in gardens in this country, but rather has a tendency to die out. It is, however, such a beautiful flower that it is well worth while planting a few bulbs each autumn. It apparently likes rather sandy soil and a sunny position.

AMONG THE SWEET PEAS.

The recent dry weather, following as it did several severe night frosts, has checked the growth of Sweet Peas very considerably, and on the whole the plants do not look very promising. They can be assisted to recover from this check by stirring the soil lightly between them at least once a week, and by giving them a good soaking with water in which nitrate of soda has been dissolved at the rate of half an ounce to each gallon of water. In most gardens it is the practice now to place short, twiggy sticks as supports for the plants in their early stages, and when they have reached the tops of these to put the longer, permanent supports in position. This system well repays the extra trouble entailed, where it is possible to carry it into effect. The young growths should, as far as possible, be induced to climb outside the sticks, as they will then grow more sturdily and be easier to get at when flowers have to be cut. Although there are a number of trainers now on the market, there is nothing to beat good brushy sticks, where these can be obtained. They have a more natural appearance and the plants always seem to cling to them better. If green fly appears on the plants, they should be promptly sprayed with a solution of soft soap and water, two ounces of soft soap being dissolved in each gallon of, preferably, soft water. Autumn-raised plants promise to flower very early; but unless the growth is strong and free, the earliest buds would be best removed before they are fully developed, otherwise stunted growth will result. H.

THE COUNTRY CIRCUS.

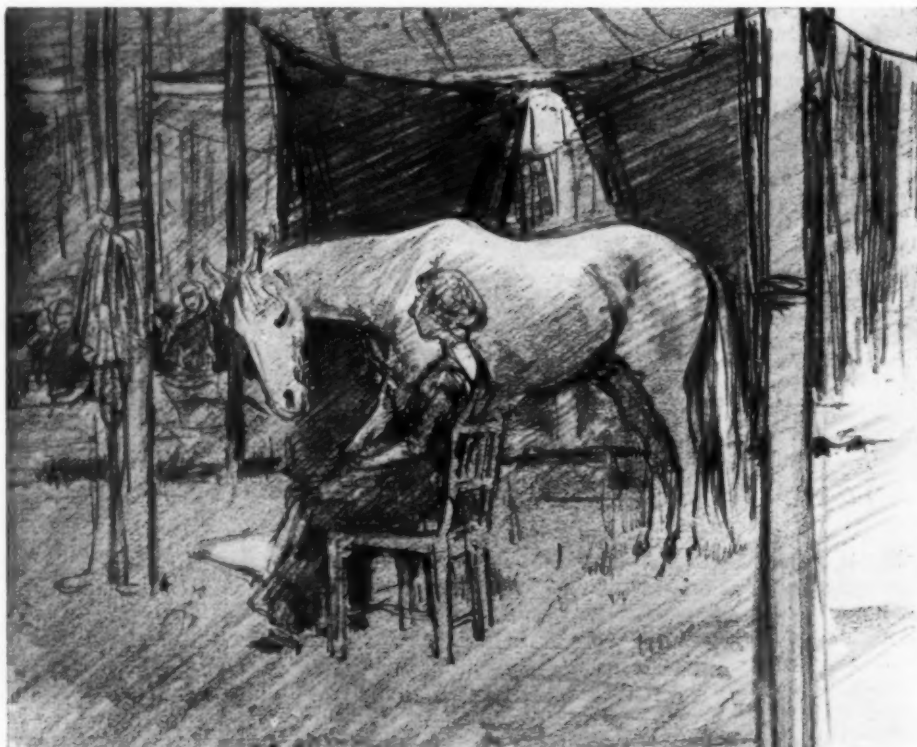


THE ARENA.

IN the matter of amusements, one would say that in London there could be found what would suit all tastes. One thing, however, is lacking. London, at least so far as I know, has no circus. With more children in its area than any other town, and the centre of what is reputed the most horse-loving country in the world, for some most mysterious reason it cannot support a circus. Many have been tried, and all, I believe, have either died of neglect or had to migrate to more congenial soil. London no longer knows the time-honoured name of Hengler's or the earlier Astley's, both of which flourished in Victorian days. I do not know how long it is since Hengler's Circus occupied their own building near Oxford Street, but the latest entertainment of the kind I can remember in town was a Russian circus which ran for a time in the old building. I suppose it went the way of the rest; certainly on the occasion of my visit the end seemed not far off, as, though the performance was excellent of its kind, the spectators did not far outnumber the staff.

There must be many in London who have never seen a circus, and I doubt not there are many children who do not even know what such an entertainment is. In regard to the question we hear so much discussed nowadays, "back to the land," and retaining those born upon it, someone, I forget who, said what was most required in the country was amusement. There is much truth in this. In an age when life generally is becoming more rapid and full of excitement in every way, you cannot expect the countryman to remain exactly as before; he, too, craves for some

of the excitement and amusement he knows others to be experiencing. Behind his plough team or among his cattle or sheep, he does not get it; they still move at the pace they did hundreds of years ago. Entertainments for the real countryman are few and far between. The circus may be a mild form of excitement, but for him and his it still continued to be numbered among the



THE CALCULATING HORSE.

amusements, and from his patronage the old-fashioned circus still manages to make its modest profits.

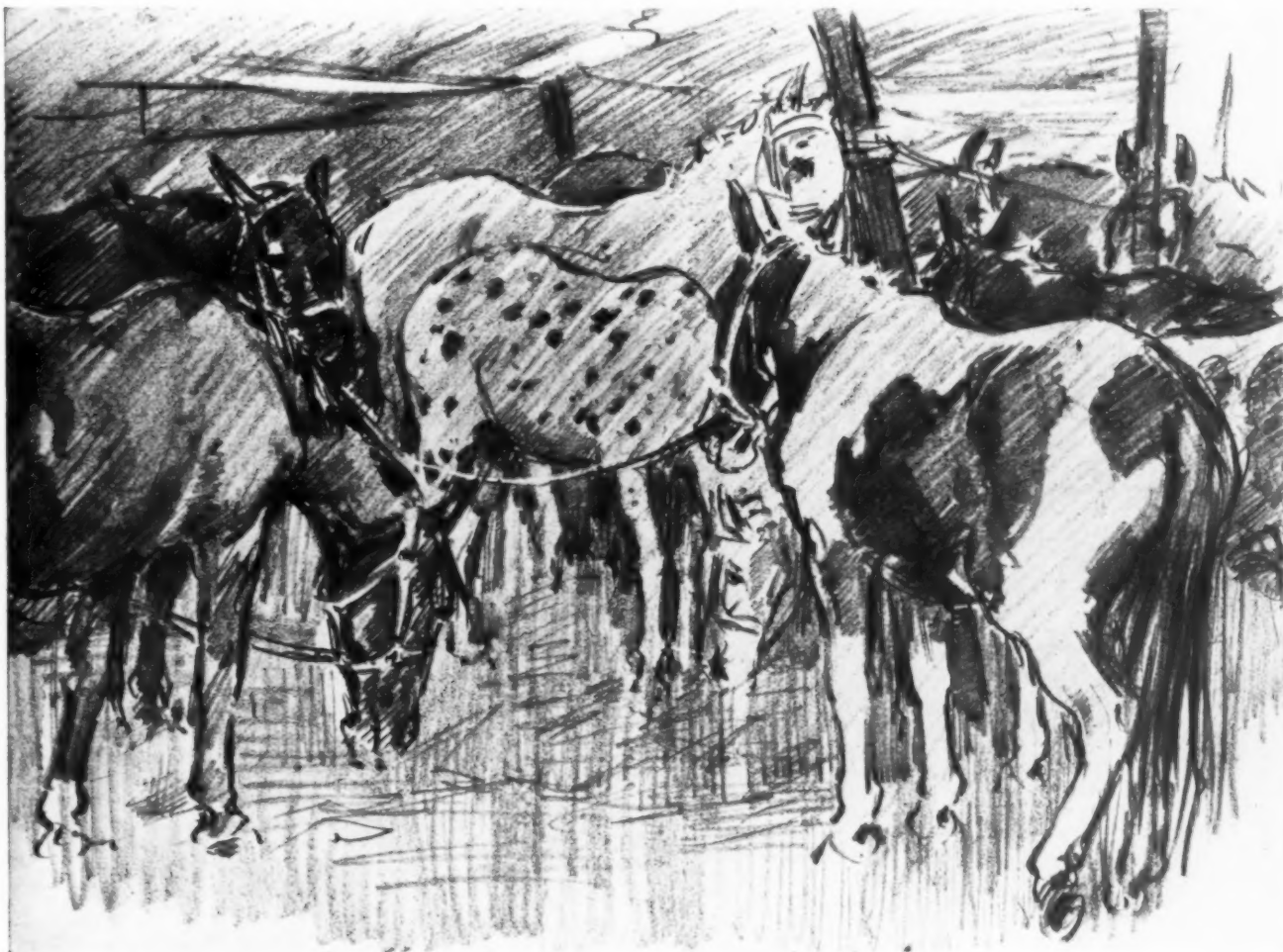
It may be an antiquated taste—it certainly is an unfashionable one—but I confess to a love of the old circus. I love the faded splendour—nothing ever seems to be new or garish, certainly the jokes of the clown are not. If age brings honour, they must be the aristocracy of humour. They do not seem to be good jokes, but surely they must be better than they seem, to have survived the length of years during which so much has been forgotten. I wonder if they have ever been written down in a book. I hope not; they would be like old jewels taken out of their antique settings. The audience at the country circus is not the least of its many charms. One sees nothing of the *blasé habitué*; from the oldest man to the youngest child, everyone is bent on each item in the programme, and the whole house, or, rather, tent, thrills when the fairy on the slack wire makes her well-rehearsed slip and recovery, or when in the "great bare-backed jockey act" the performer succeeds, after failing several times, in the feat of jumping from the ground on to the much-resined back of his gallant piebald.

The circus in a tent has a picturesque interest as well as a human one. My favourite is the afternoon performance. At this time, in sunny weather, one often sees the most marvellous effects of light and shade, the like it would be hard to find anywhere else. The great green tent, in gloomy half tone, cut here and there with light where the sky



THE HAUTE ECOLE.

can be seen through the joins, whence splashes of sun come to paint brilliant spots on the grass of the arena and the red of the supporting poles and faded curtains, yield gorgeous colours in the way Nature seems so often



IN THE HORSE TENT.

to do by accident, and the artist so seldom succeeds in doing, try how he may.

Those who have to do with a travelling circus certainly do not eat the bread of idleness, and the industry and skill displayed by them is worthy of a greater reward than, I fear, it usually brings. Think of what is comprised in the twenty-four hours of the circus employé's life: Packing up an enormous tent and numerous smaller ones, as well as all properties, and

caring for a large number of horses, transporting all, anything from five to fifteen miles, setting up again and taking part in the "Grand Procession" about midday, an afternoon performance, followed by an evening one, then pack again, and so on, day after day. The case of these people—who, by the way, seem quite happy—might be recommended to the demagogue who tub-thumps to the tune of a universal eight-hours' day.
G.

LITERATURE.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

ON this the Browning Centenary Week, the thoughts of those who love literature have naturally been turned to a revision of their opinions about the great Victorians. We use the plural because, in this connection, it is not possible to separate Browning from Tennyson. Different as they were in genius, they represented two opposite tendencies of the age in which they lived. Both of them have suffered in reputation since their death, Tennyson more than Browning. It was said of the late Poet Laureate that he was one of the few who had lived long enough to see their own works become classic. He certainly believed that he was very near the top of the literature of the time, and came to regard the reception of a visitor as the bestowal of something like Royal favour. But a new age is always iconoclast in regard to the gods of the generation which preceded it. Many critical knives have been buried in Tennyson since his death, and only now does it appear as though he were getting into his proper niche in the temple of fame. In all that pertained to love and passion and romance, it is now generally admitted that he was bourgeois and common-place. In his musings on the destiny of man and the mystery of death he was a great poet, indeed one of our greatest poets. Let anyone compare the jejune mock-romantic love episodes of the *Idylls* with the Death of Arthur, and he seems to have exchanged the atmosphere of an old-fashioned three-volume novelist for that of a Hebrew prophet. With Robert Browning the case was different. Although a society was invented by the late Dr. Furnivall for the purpose of interpreting and popularising him, he was never fully appreciated during his lifetime. Someone said of him that his rhymes bruised the ear like flints, and that was considered a damning fact in regard to an art whose first essential is harmony. He attracted doctrinaires and faddists by his habit of discussing small problems of life in verse. In fact, no more hardened moralist ever strung lines together. He was for ever preaching, and this cost him the allegiance of those who loved poetry for its own sake. Thus at death it was impossible that there could be such a revolution of feeling as occurred in the case of Tennyson, simply because enthusiasm for him was confined to groups; it never was general. But, all the same, there has been a considerable change in the critical attitude. Readers no longer care for the very long poems by which he made his name, and it is perfectly certain that if such works as "Paracelsus" and "Sordello" were issued from the press to-day, they would be a dead failure. Our surprise at Robert Browning's "arrival" is due in large measure to the mountainous obstacles which he placed in the way of his own success. No one who likes poetry would dispute that there is plenty of it in "Paracelsus." The whole conception of the work is imaginative. Here is a man whose name has been handed down by tradition as that of a quack and sophist, examined and found to be of the family of those who were stoned by the multitude because they had the gifts of prophecy. Browning found a hero where the common herd has seen only a charlatan. That was poetry of a kind; but his case was made out at too great a length, and "Paracelsus" fails to possess charm, in spite of its poetic conception and the inclusion in it of verse like

Heap cassia, sandal-buds and stripes
Of labdanum, and aloe-balls,
Smeared with dull nard an Indian wipes
From out her hair: such balsam falls
Down sea-side mountain pedestals,
From tree-tops where tired winds are fain,
Spent with the vast and howling main,
To treasure half their island-gain.

We have said that Tennyson is best when dwelling on the great mysteries of life and eternity. An ever-present consciousness of mystery shines in many of his most homely pieces. It is found expressed to the full in "The Lotus-Eaters" and in the extraordinary group of poems which he composed in extreme old age; but it also shone in such occasional verse as the lovely song "To Sleep!" in "The Foresters." In all the best of it

there is the feeling of doubt which comes upon every great mind that tries to fathom the ultimate destination of man.

Browning at an early period of life seems to have considered that he had solved the problem. We find his answer to it beautifully given in many poems, of these perhaps the most popular is "Evelyn Hope":

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while,
My heart seemed full as it could hold?
There was place and to spare for the frank young smile
And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold.
So, hush,—I will give you this leaf to keep:
See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand!
There, that is our secret: go to sleep!
You will wake, and remember, and understand,

and as definitely in "Rabbi Ben Ezra"; the whole tone of it is in accord with the fourteenth verse:

And I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone
Once more on my adventure brave and new:
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armour to indue.

It was part of his creed that on this earth it is

work enough to watch
The Master work, and catch
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's true play.

Here it is the certainty of statement that kills the poetry. Even Christina Rossetti could not be so positive:

And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise or set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.

When dealing with things of Time and Eternity, Browning is aggressively positive where the great ones of the earth, Job and Homer and David and Shakespeare, had beheld darkness only or felt overwhelmed by the coming of many waters. His optimism is too robust for a doubting age, even when it is so manly as in the "Epilogue, To Asolando":

One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.
No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,
"Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed,—fight on, fare ever
There as here!"

He is at his best when he realises in the intervals of rugged thought how "oblivion scattereth her poppy":

Dear dead women, with such hair, too, what's become of all the gold
Used to hang and brush their bosoms?

And he looks forward happy and reconciled to this fate:

How well I know what I mean to do
When the long dark autumn evenings come,

Much of his moralising, too, is done with a fine imaginativeness which transfigures it. The little "All that I know of a certain star" or "I groped my way across your room in the drear dark dead of night" are didactic, but with an inner light that redeems them. On the other hand, the use of the vivid phrase led him into many an irritating mannerism. He was like a public speaker who cultivates certain tricks of oratory, such as a hesitating voice, when he is not hesitating but only seeking a means of drawing attention to a striking phrase. Browning delighted in abrupt passages like that which finishes an incident in the French camp:

The chief's eye flashed; but presently
Softened itself, as sheathes
A film the mother-eagle's eye
When her bruised eaglet breathes;
"You're wounded!" "Nay," the soldier's pride
Touched to the quick, he said:
"I'm killed, Sire!" And his chief beside,
Smiling the boy fell dead.

Similar examples of calculated abruptness are so numerous that they completely lose their effect.

Like a very natural, unsophisticated human companion, Browning irritates at one moment and pleases at another. He argues till you think him the dullest and most boring of versifiers, then a flash of insight, a gleam of humanity, a vision and a glory of gold reveal the features of a divine poet under the mask of a posturing, ear-piercing arguer.

THE MODERN EYE.

Cophetua, A Play in One Act, by John Drinkwater. (David Nutt.)

MR. DRINKWATER is one of the most promising of our young poets and, in addition to the general interest attaching to his work, it has the additional claim to attention of showing the vast difference in the way of looking at a subject and in its treatment between the poet of the mid-Victorian era and the poet of to-day. Tennyson in "The Beggar Maid" embodied the rather common form of romance. The gist of it is in the last four lines:

So sweet a face, such angel grace,
In all that land had never been:
Cophetua sware a royal oath:
"This beggar maid shall be my queen!"

Mr. Drinkwater makes a very different approach to the subject. He brings King Cophetua on to the stage with his people, his mother and his captains all resolved that he shall take a wife. The note is struck in the opening lines spoken by the captain:

"Tis noon, and with echoing wing
The days of a month have sped,
And we stay to know if the king
Will take a queen to his bed."

Then follows a keen dispute. The King is a rebel to his subjects. He will take no queen unless she be of his own choice, and in his arguments he discloses the loftiest ideal of what love is to him and may be to all. He will break his body to dust, face unflinching the outland hordes, meet death itself cheerfully; but set his love for sale he will not. The Five Wise Men, the Queen and the Captain apply all sorts of worldly arguments of compromise. Each approaches the subject from an individual point of view and tries to make the King see that doing as they wish will conduce to his own comfort and happiness; but their attempts at persuasion only bring out into clearer and more shining relief the King's resolve. In the midst of it enters the maiden among other beggars, and the two fall in love at once. He flings her a bag of gold, which she takes, but pours the gold from the bag down the steps for the other beggars to collect; she kisses the bag and ties it in her girdle. In short, as cleverly as he treated the King, Mr. Drinkwater makes his beggar maid elucidate the woman's ideal. It culminates in this fine speech:

"Not dowered as a queen might be,
Who sold herself you see me here,
Yet something do I bring for fee,
Good counsel, comfortable cheer,
A body undefiled, a soul
Not alien before the Lord,
A will unbent, a purpose whole,
A passion shining as a sword.
To you in humble-wise, my King,
With nought of fear or servile greed,
My sacred love unsoiled I bring,
My service, and my woman's need,
A story of some careful days
Spent in a cloister no man knows,
Some peace of silent lily ways,
Some beauty of the curling rose."

This is the most direct, simple and passionate work that we have seen from Mr. Drinkwater's pen, and if he is going to write more plays like it, the Pilgrim Players are to be envied.

NOVELS OF THE WEEK.

Wintering Hay, by John Trevena. (Constable and Co., Limited.)

THOUGH a long novel, *Wintering Hay*, by John Trevena, could have been longer without wearying the reader who has once passed the somewhat misleading opening chapter, which shows an elfin spirit of elusiveness of expression which might deter the casual person from adventuring further. Mr. John Trevena's work has atmosphere, rather tragic atmosphere, it is true, but none the less arresting for all that. Cyril Rossingall is hardly more than a youth when, in defending Maria Fley on the moors from the brutal onslaught of Gideon Fley, the man falls dead from heart disease. The lad, whose spirit has been in some sense broken by the restraint and correction of the uncomprehending relatives with whom he has his unhappy home, is horrified by the consequences of his intervention. Though both he and Maria know him guiltless of the death of the father of her child, they agree to hide the body, Cyril beating down the woman's opposition to the unchristian burial. Cyril buries the body of Gideon among the rocks, and when his task is done sets out for Wintering Hay, his home. He is weighed down by his secret, fearful of its surprising, yet determined that he cannot face the stir and inevitable ejection from Wintering Hay, which must follow his confession of his act. Near to Wintering Hay live the Corindon family; Corindon himself a kind of gentleman farmer and a curiously interesting character. The Corindons have two children, and with these two Cyril, against the desires of the Muttters, his uncle and aunt, has been intimate since childhood. Not capable of keeping his secret to himself, Cyril makes George Corindon his confidant. There is a deep affection between the pair, and George, after entreating Cyril to disclose the truth—but without success—declares that it makes no difference to him. Nevertheless, when, later, Cyril imagines himself in love with Lilian Corindon, George begs him to tell her the truth. Cyril is obdurate. He addresses himself to the elder Corindon for his daughter, and is met with some home-truths as to the opinion Lilian's father

holds of him; he is advised to strike out for himself, to free himself from dependence. But there is that in the character of Cyril Rossingall which marks him out to enter the lives of others only to bring upon them disaster. And so it comes that, through the course of a sad but moving and exceedingly clever novel, the author traces the slow development of a character that is no one's enemy so much as its own. There is some very beautiful description in the book which strikes a note of savage grandeur very much in keeping with the extraordinary and primitive conditions of life here depicted. A fine piece of work.

Elizabeth in Retreat, by Margaret Westrup. (The Bodley Head.)

THE real heroine of *Elizabeth in Retreat* is Prudence Wingfield, who, at the beginning of the story, is living at Cherry Cross as a new-comer and a stranger in the neighbourhood round about. Elizabeth's friend, Muriel Latimer, has been deputed by Elizabeth to find her a house, and had thought of Cherry Cross as suitable until told by the agent that it is already rented. Elizabeth must be content with Elm Hill. But Elizabeth is not content, and when she arrives she calls upon Prudence, who is a stranger to her, and proposes a change of house. This is not a propitious manner of introducing herself to the other, and Prudence treats her visitor with scant courtesy, not making upon her the best of impressions. There is some mystery about Prudence Wingfield, and this is very quickly exploited by the neighbourhood, who proceed to cold-shoulder the intruder, who promises to have a bad time of it. Prudence, proud, reserved, shamed by her position, must have been extremely unhappy but for the kindness of Muriel Latimer and Mark Ridgeway, whose friendship she, after a struggle, accepts. Elizabeth does not come so well out of the situation; she is not as likeable as in that other novel of Mrs. Westrup's, "Elizabeth's Children"; indeed, she is here rather a prig. But Prudence is a charming character, and those who read her story will be delighted by the wit and cleverness which characterise the writing of this author.

Kingfisher Blue, by Halliwell Sutcliffe. (Smith, Elder and Co.)

THIS is one of the best things Mr. Halliwell Sutcliffe has written. The hero of *Kingfisher Blue* tells his own story; and though from the start it is obvious on what lines that story is going to run, the pleasure the narrative affords is none the less for that. When Mary Ogilvie comes into the life of the hero, it seems to him not improbable that her advent spells the ending of the happy friendship which has existed between him and his friend Anthony. The two men have contracted a sincere liking for each other, this liking being, on the part of Jack, a dependent and jealous one, a fact which he owns to quite frankly in writing of himself in this diary, which is obviously written for the eyes of Mary Ogilvie—"Anthony's Wife"—alone. It is a sincere piece of manly self-betrayal which few will read without feeling a very kindly affection for the man who began by being jealous of his friend's wife and ended by falling in love with her, the results being in no way to her detriment, though it held for them both the pain of a difficult renunciation. Mr. Sutcliffe has a direct and careful style, his story is most sympathetically told, and he never degenerates into sentimentality. Altogether a human and appealing piece of work.

Herringfleet, by Ethel Kidson. (Chapman and Hall.)

IT is improbable that Miss Ethel Kidson set out to weave a plot for *Herringfleet*; for, though her story is a pleasant and interesting one, there is little in it. Its attraction lies much more in the characterisation than in the construction; the men and women who come and go as the story moves—none in particular being hero or heroine—are, some of them, quite excellently portrayed. *Herringfleet* is a little Northern town, and the author has succeeded in giving us a close and faithful picture of the humble life in it. From John Moorhouse, the pork-butcher, who conceives a passion for "Bonny Annie Henderson," whose father has a grand new shop "over t' bridge," to the little dancing-master, the broken-down gentleman, who teaches him how to dance his way into Annie's good graces, there is not one character that has not the semblance of truth. With a more concentrated interest Miss Kidson should improve upon *Herringfleet*, which shows considerable promise, but betrays a certain crudity of construction and a disposition to meander.

In Secret Places, by Lloyd Williams. (Hurst and Blackett, Limited.)

THE hero of *In Secret Places* had no cause to complain of the uneventfulness of existence after he entered the service of Lord Sinthorpe, alias "Mr. Stephens." When Hilary Preston, together with several other undergraduates, indulged in a "rag" to celebrate the relief of an outpost on the Indian Frontier, he did not anticipate a tragic ending to his fun and the ending of his Varsity career. After an experience of sorts and the contracting of an unfortunate marriage, he finds himself offered a position as private secretary to a great man whose unattractive personality rather minimises his satisfaction in accepting a change of fortune. But he does accept; and, almost immediately, finds himself drawn into a web of deceit and unscrupulousness, as a looker-on rather than as an actor in the play. Mr. Lloyd Williams knows how to weave a plot, and this is a thoroughly interesting one; though melodramatic, the action is not altogether improbable, and the characters arouse the attention. A readable novel.

In the Vortex, by Clive Holland. (Hurst and Blackett.)

THIS is an interesting romance of the Latin Quarter. Elbert Glynn, a young American, with the makings of an artist in him, manages with his mother's and sister's aid to come to Paris to study Art. Of no great strength of character, he is quickly caught and drawn out of his depth into the vortex. He casts in his lot with Jeanette Delorme, and, quick-living beyond his simple means, finds himself forced into the unenviable position of depending on "pot-boilers" for his livelihood. Fortunately, before it is too late, realisation of the significance of his position comes home to him, and with it knowledge of the fact that he loves Jeanette and must work for her. In the course of the drawing of an extremely clever picture of life in the Latin Quarter, Mr. Clive Holland introduces us to several well-defined and natural characters; and he follows very closely the effect on Glynn of the liberty and novelty of an environment for which his puritanical upbringing had in no sense prepared him. There is life in the book, and reality, and altogether it is an exceedingly vivid presentation of the Parisian Art student climbing the ladder to fame.

[A LIST OF NEW BOOKS WILL BE FOUND ON PAGE 38*.]

ON THE GREEN.

BY HORACE HUTCHINSON AND BERNARD DARWIN.

ST. ANDREWS NOT AT ITS BEST.

I AM afraid that one of the inferences which we are obliged to draw from the scoring at the spring meeting of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, when, save for the fine win, with 79, of Mr. Edward Blackwell, none of a small but also rather an accomplished field could get round in a lower score than 83, is that the classic links have by no means recovered from the terrible scorching up which they suffered last summer. They have been rested a good deal during the spring, and it was only in the medal week itself that the best part of the greens were put into use; but it is through the green, as well as on the actual putting greens, that the course has been so injured. It is to be noted that even in the play off for second place Mr. Norman Hunter's winning score was 84, Mr. Walter Blackwell taking 87, and Mr. Mellor making no return. Yet the day was not a very difficult one. A wet summer would be a blessing undisguised for the recuperation of this best of all good golf links.

SOME FLOATING RUBBER-CORES.

Probably it would be an offence against good manners and that eternal maxim which forbids gratuitous advertisement if I were to name the company; but a certain firm of ball-makers, probably the makers of the most popular ball on the market at the present moment, has sent me some balls to try which are of that large size and of that specific gravity, or lightness, which some of the advocates of standardisation of the golf ball think would meet, or would modify, the "present discontents." They are very good balls indeed. They are such good balls that their goodness seems to me to knock rather a large hole in the logical fabric of those who argue in favour of a big ball which shall float in water as the desirable standard. This ball is of good size and it floats, but, nevertheless, it flies. And this is what we want to mitigate—the length of flight of the ball and the length of its travel altogether. This ball in itself seems to prove that there is no solution of the problem on this line. Perhaps on very hard and dry ground, such as we had last summer, the small, heavy balls run rather further than the others; but the chances are against our having another such summer for a long while, and it is possible that the long run of the balls was due to the summer rather than to the size or weight of the balls. They happened to be introduced just when the ground was getting into an exceptional state. Still, it is evident that if we have not yet reached the moment of golf ball development at which standardisation is absolutely necessary, we may find it at any moment absolutely thrust upon us as a stern necessity by some further evolution of the ball. That is what we have to expect at every turn, and that is why standardisation, if it be possible, is so desirable. But its possibility remains very far from proved—that is to say, the settlement of any satisfactory standard ball of the rubber-cored species.

There is one peculiarity of these floating balls which is rather interesting—that they seem to lose their best resiliency, after being knocked about, more



LORD DARTMOUTH DRIVING.

quickly than those of the small and heavy species. It will be remembered that this was a striking feature of the "Haskell" balls, the first of the rubber-cored kind, and they, too, would float in water. They went so much better the first two or three times of striking that persons of less opulence than millionaires, who could not afford to put down a new ball at every other hole or so, often used to carry a new ball in reserve for any particularly long carry which they anticipated. The fact that these modern floating balls appear to lose their resiliency in the like manner as those older floaters seems to point to the probability that it is easier to make a heavy ball which will stand punishment and continue to rebound at its best than a lighter ball. Possibly this has something to do with a tighter winding of the rubber thread in the heavier ball. I do not know, and probably it is one of the makers' secrets, which they would not very readily give away. The lighter ball appears to have the merit that you can stop it more quickly than the heavier one off a cut stroke, which really does seem to indicate that it will not run as far off an ordinary drive; but, on the other hand, it does not hold its straight course as well on the putting green. All this accords with what we should expect of its relative lightness.

PARLIAMENTARY GOLF.

Parliament is certainly of fertile ingenuity in trying new experiments in the manner of playing its annual golf competition. This year, with a bigger entry than ever before, it has decided to play in two sections—an upper and a lower house, not divided on any medieval system of heredity, but according to golf-playing capacity. The scene is to be Rye, a setting in which much tragedy is possible for the lower and less effective exponents. Mr. Angus Hambro, as was likely, is the heaviest penalised man, owing four; but Mr. Harry Forster is only by a stroke less severely dealt with. The man who looks to me about the most dangerous at his points (or, rather, without points) is Lord Lurgan, at scratch. Mr. Hambro may be able to give him four, or Mr. Forster to give him three, but it would be a doubtful financial operation to back them to do so. Lord Lurgan has a good man to play with, according to the draw, in Mr. C. T. Mills, who also has no points, either *plus* or *minus*. H. G. H.

A MATCH OF FLUCTUATIONS.

That the Black Watch should win the Inter-Regimental Challenge Cup at Hoylake last week was not a particularly unexpected piece of news, because they have won it four times before. In their final match, however, against the 24th Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery there was one truly remarkable game—that between Captain Skene and Captain Boyd. The match was played on two days, eighteen holes on each, and at the end of the first day Captain Boyd retired to rest with the very comfortable lead of six holes. Next morning the fun really began. Captain Skene won the first, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and eighth holes and had the match all square. He then proceeded to win the ninth and tenth and stood two up with eight to play. By all the laws of probability Captain Skene ought to have gone on winning holes and Captain Boyd losing them, but the pendulum now swung round once more. Captain Boyd won four out of the next six holes and stood dormy two up. He lost the seventeenth, but managed to halve the last, and so won a match of really extraordinary



LORD ERROLL.

Who is playing in the Parliamentary Handicap.

fluctuations by one hole. I said that by all the laws of probability Captain Skene ought to have won, and I suppose that a man who has won eight holes out of ten generally does go on winning. At the same time, one can give many instances to the contrary. There seems to be a kind of natural law to something like this effect, that when a player once begins losing holes from a long lead he will go on losing them, and probably play pretty badly in doing so, until they are all gone. Then when he is brought back to all square he will suddenly pull himself together and the match out of the fire. It is much as if a spendthrift should continue his wild courses as long as he has a sixpence left, then when completely ruined he should take his coat off and set valiantly to work.

SOME HISTORICAL PARALLELS.

There were some good examples of this phenomenon in the English Ladies' Championship at Prince's, Sandwich, the other day. Miss Winifred Martin Smith was dorny six down to her opponent; she actually succeeded in halving the match and then lost at the nineteenth hole. There was another match in which a lady who was dorny five down halved her match to perish similarly at the nineteenth. Much the same thing happened in the American Championship, when Mr. Hilton, after being a great many holes up on Mr. Herreshoff, won only at the thirty-seventh; and I have a distinct recollection of a match in an amateur championship at Sandwich a good many years ago, when Mr. Charles Hutchings, who was some almost incredible number down to Mr. T. T. Gray, succeeded in halving the match and was then duly beaten at the extra hole. The exact cause of the phenomenon is difficult to determine. It may be that the hunter

tires after his long pursuit and gives his victim a chance of escape. It may be—and this is the more common—that the hunted one, after a long and cowardly flight, at last turns savagely at bay determined to sell his life dearly. It is the courage of despair that is chiefly accountable alike for the ruthlessness of the pursuit and for the last and often successful rally of the hunted.

SOME PAIRS AT HOYLAKE.

Last year Fortune behaved herself extraordinarily well as regards the draw for partners in the *Sphere* and *Tatler* foursomes by distributing the great men as partners to the lesser ones with a very even hand. She has behaved not quite so well this year; but, still, not at all ill, and the draw for next week's play at Hoylake is, on the whole, a very fair one. The star pair consists, of course, of Duncan and Sherlock, and this combination of extreme brilliancy and horrid steadiness ought to be hard to beat. Duncan has never, or hardly ever, done himself justice when Sherlock has been his opponent; but he may find him more to his taste as a partner. These two will have quite a hard match in the very first round, when they meet Renouf and Taylor—not the great J. H., but P. E. of Woodbridge—a really good young player with a very good style. The match in the first round, however, will be, of course, that between Harry Vardon and McNeill and Braid and Roberts. Both the great men have drawn very good partners, McNeill in particular being capable of really brilliant golf, and having more than once successfully disputed the supremacy in Ireland with Michael Moran. Peter Rainford and Jack White strike the eye as a likely pair, and another very good one is Herd and David Grant. Altogether I can see a lot of matches that are going, I hope, to give me much fun in the watching. B. D.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A PLEA FOR PRESERVATION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Permit me to echo your protest against Corsham Almshouses getting into private hands. To me, as a Kent man, they possess a particular interest from the fact that Edward Hasted, the historian of Kent, in his declining days and in broken fortune, found a refuge at Corsham. He was appointed master of the hospital in 1807, and died there in 1812. He was buried at Corsham, and there is an entry in the register: "Edw. Hasted, formerly the Kentish Historian, died January 14th, 1812, buried January 21st." His confession, full of much very interesting detail, is to be found in Vol. XXVI. of *Archæologia Cantiana*.

"Anecdotes of the Hasted Family Drawn up to the best of my Recollection and to the best of my Remembrance in the year 1800 by me, Edw. Hasted."

"Nos quoque Florinus, sed Flos erat ille Caducus, Fœciniis perit Flebilis ille Dolis."—P. P. O.

"Peccavi, penœtui, oblivio."

He was born at Dove Court in Lombard Street, December 31st, 1732, and baptised at St. Mary Woolnoth.—E. D. TILL.

THE WORD "YALE."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Dr. Shipley, in his articles on "The Hunting of the Yale," printed in Nos. 794 and 795 of *COUNTRY LIFE*, discusses the derivation of the word "yale." In all probability the word is derived from the Indian word "gayal," one species of the bibovine type of cattle (*Bos frontalis*). A good illustration of the same can be found in Mr. Lydecker's "Wild Oxen."—ELISHA W. MORSE, United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Experiment Stations, Washington, D. C.

FROM A NORTH DEVON GARDEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—During last summer I wrote of bird-life in this small garden—of a pair of chaffinches who built again among the yellow blossoms of a flowering bush, as in previous summers. I told how the "stagbird" (locally so called) forsook the hemp seed spread out on the garden path directly the young were hatched, and with his mate was constantly on the wing catching flies and other insects for their food. I inferred that they looked on hard seeds as unsuitable for youthful digestion, and *pro tem.* gave up their own fancy for them. I watched the nestlings make their first flight with the parents into the woodland below, and looked for the return of the cock when he had discharged his paternal duties. In about a fortnight he came to the old spot for hemp seed, and until October was a constant visitor, but was always alone. He is sometimes called the "bachelor" bird, from the fact that his wife deserts him after the breeding season. During the winter the birds were fed here with hemp seed. About a dozen chaffinches, mostly hens, used to come with him, great and little tits and a blackbird. This spring he is here constantly, watched with interest by my little caged redpole from the window. He calls his mate to partake of the feast; but she is evidently engaged with her first nest in the woodland below, and pays no heed to the summons. He is in spring plumage—a most perfect specimen, the white feathers in the wings and under-tail in a regular pattern. The blackbird comes sometimes and picks up a bit of meat, and his nest is near. Two great tits also visit a piece of suet hung on the paling opposite. Their spring plumage is perfect. The first pair of swallows came here on April 13th, and at once began to build under the same eaves as last summer. I saw the first bat flying in the dusk caused by the sun's eclipse, which was seen to perfection in this district in a cloudless sky. During Eastertide rain and mist filled the valley for two days and nights without ceasing, but the "clear shining after rain" is always wonderful. I know no such pure and transparent atmosphere. I will just add that the cuckoo was first heard here on April 22nd; near Honiton on April 19th. In Hampshire he was always rather earlier. I see he was heard in Suffolk on April 19th. I believe that the cuckoo's crossing to the Norfolk Coast and coming across to the West of England by stages is recognised by all naturalists, and doubtless they return to their old haunts. Naturally, a North Devon cuckoo is longer getting here than those who pause in Mid-Devon or in preceding districts. A Norfolk gamekeeper wrote last summer in *COUNTRY*

LIFE that cuckoos stay about there all July. It would be interesting to know if their arrival there this spring agrees with the dates given here. I am anxious also to be informed whether cuckoos cross to any other part of England than Norfolk. I see that tortoiseshell, peacock and blue butterflies are seen in Suffolk. They are here also, flitting among the spring flowers, which are nearly over. Yesterday I saw a large brown owl in the woodland. Owls hoot there constantly, and the nest cannot be far off.—A. M. E., Bratton Fleming, North Devon.

SQUIRRELS EATING YOUNG PHEASANTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

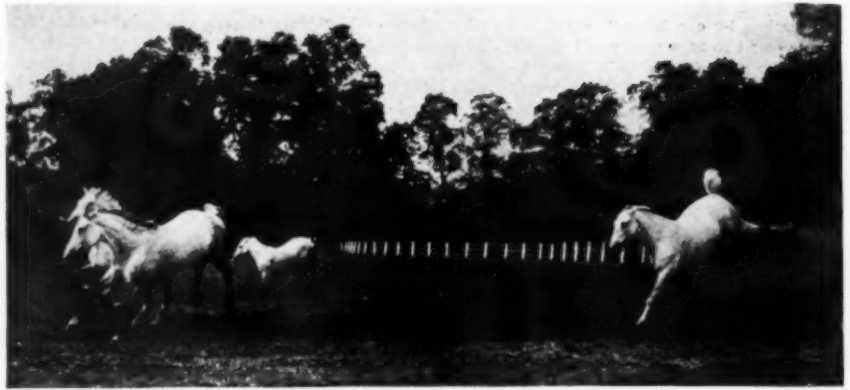
SIR,—Reading again, possibly for the third, but certainly not for the last time of asking, the contribution of the late Rev. H. A. Macpherson to the "Pheasant" volume of Messrs. Longman's "Fur and Feather" series, I have been struck by a passage relative to the chief verminous enemies that pheasants, according to the writer, have to fear in this country. The passage is as follows: "In Great Britain the fox and the house-cat are the vermin that the pheasant dreads. . . . The eggs and young are sought after by such small quadrupeds as the squirrel, the hedgehog, the stoat and that bane of modern civilisation, the brown rat." This last is the sentence to which I should like to call the attention of some of your readers, and to ask them whether in their experience they have ever known an instance of the squirrel attacking young pheasants. I have not the slightest doubt that the squirrel would eat pheasants' eggs if he were to come on them, for I have detected him in the very act of eating the eggs of other birds, so why not the pheasant's? But I never have seen him attack or eat any young birds of any kind. That the late Mr. Macpherson had seen him do so I take to be proved by the words quoted, for he was a careful field naturalist, both in observation and statement; but is the case not very exceptional? If not, it is almost certain that some of your readers will be able to adduce testimony in support of the charge against the squirrel. It is significant that Mr. Macpherson puts the squirrel in the first place on this list of small vermin, though that may be only an accidental elevation. It is quite possible that the instance he apparently witnessed of the squirrel attacking young birds may have been an abnormal thing. We have had record of very unlikely creatures doing this very act of eating young pheasants, and it was but a week or two back that there was an account in *COUNTRY LIFE* of young pheasants being attacked by a Norfolk plover, of all strange birds in the world. This was in the neighbourhood of Thetford, and I know the estate on which it occurred. A little further in his chapter Mr. Macpherson discusses the case against the jay as a game destroyer, and is disposed to give that gay rascal the benefit of the doubt—as many of our later observers are also disposed to give him. But it would be most interesting, to me at least, and, I venture to think, to many others of your readers, if we could have a little more light thrown on the case of the squirrel, as he ought to appear in the court of the gamekeeper.—H. G. H.

THE SUMMERING OF HORSES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your issue of September 2nd, 1911, I read a letter on "The Summering of Horses," by "E. B." People who own horses are supposed, often wrongly, to be fond of them. They are, I admit, fond of them in these peculiar ways—If they are good jumpers, willing, young enough and yet not too young, tractable, fast, etc. while they are being used; but when summer, or old age, comes, what then? What does the fondness amount to? In the case of hunters, as "E. B." remarks, out they go to the fields; but this freedom, which they no doubt enjoy, is spoilt for them without protection from flies, because they have been stupidly docked and deprived of their manes as well. They are not looked after well when out; their water supply, which should be copious during all weathers, especially hot weather, is seldom up to the mark, and their bran and oats is quite suddenly withdrawn, being put straight on to grass diet only, to which they have been unaccustomed for six months or more. They come in, no doubt, in September, or earlier, to be prepared for the winter, with feet and legs, which have recovered from the hard work during the winter, and sides healed from the cruel spur, and sore backs, made by bad riders; but that is no excuse for neglecting them in other ways during their summer outing, which should be made as much of a "rest cure" as possible for them, considering what hard work

is always got out of them from October till March or April. They are, when taken in, put as suddenly on hard food as they were on to grass diet. I do not know if the sudden change to a grass diet produces any bad effects, but it is certain that the sudden change from grass to hard food often causes swelling of the gums and lampas, for which many benighted persons still burn and cut—the best cure is simply soft food and bran and plenty of water for a few days till allayed. If absolutely necessary after this, a surgically-clean knife, or lancet, may be drawn lightly, with care, across the swollen parts, to give relief by a little blood-letting, but only if the return to soft food fails. Very few creatures, including mankind, could stand the sudden and entire change of diet twice a year without ill effects of some kind resulting; but when horses are sent out to grass, no one troubles to see if it disagrees with them just at first or not. If the carelessness shown to hunters' needs in summer is great, how much harder is the lot of the old horses of all sorts, dragged in during the hot summer to be used as carriage horses, farm horses, etc., often old hunters without, as one may say, a leg left to stand on. These, after hard summer work, are turned out for winter (except a more or less fortunate few kept in for the use of grooms or as hacks). Can anything be more inhuman than this? These exhausted old horses are joined by "old pets," whom a false sentiment will not permit their shallow-thinking owners to destroy mercifully. These owners are kinder, I must admit, than those who thoughtlessly sell their "old pets" to dealers to be dragged to Antwerp to suffer beyond description; but still are unkind, because often their "old pets" die of exposure and starvation in their own fields. Now, what have these old creatures put out to grass for the winter to go through after having been stabled and looked after and well fed all the summer, if worked hard? They have to endure rain, hail, snow, cold winds, damp, all the winter in turns. They no longer get a warm feed, nor if ill, enough attention. This is all most thoughtless and cruel, and in the case of old unusable animals surely it is kinder to have them put out of the way mercifully—not with a pick-axe in the hands of a fool, which is sometimes done. Old horses require their food chopped up because their teeth are gone or are useless. That may be done for them when stabled, but not when out at grass, and they often find it difficult to eat hard, tough grass. I know of several "old pets" having been found dead in fields from exposure during the winter—according to the owners, of old age, for they did not wish to think, but they generally felt, that it was due to exposure and gradual starvation. This treatment is most unfair to them in their old age, considering also what enjoyment and use has been got out of them. They are nearly always put in the worst field also. These things should not be left to coachmen and grooms to see to; their tender mercies are nil. They nearly always hate old horses and are never inclined to be kind to them, feeling as they do that their useless existence only causes more trouble and gives more work at times, and so the horses "out at grass" are "out of mind." All this does not sound as if owners loved their horses truly. If an "old pet" is ordered to be shot, the merciful owner should see that the animal is really dead and has not been sold by some underling to one of the dealers who trade in old horses, if so, his last case will be worse than the first. If owners of animals would only try to understand their wants, and that what it suits the owner to do through sentiment or thoughtlessness does not always make for the welfare or happiness of those creatures committed to their charge, they could avoid giving



JUMPING FOR JOY.

much unnecessary suffering to poor "old pets" and old, but useful, animal drudges.—K. M. S.

THE ELEANOR CROSS AT GEDDINGTON.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Out of the original twelve to fifteen crosses erected by Edward I. to the memory of his Queen, Eleanor, but three now remain. As far as my memory goes you have never shown Geddington in the pages of *COUNTRY LIFE*. Everybody knows the story: When Eleanor died at Harby, not far from Lincoln, Edward, "having now lost the Jewell which he most esteemed, returned towards London to accompany the corps unto Westminster," and at every place where the procession halted for the night he caused a memorial cross to be built. The Queen's body was embalmed, the coffin filled with spices, and the sad procession with the King and all his retinue set forth from Lincoln on December 4th, 1290, probably for Grantham; but the route is uncertain, though it was almost certainly from Stamford that they came to Geddington in Northamptonshire. The somewhat lengthy route to Westminster was arranged to pass the great religious houses, where the body could remain during the night and a ceremonial service be conducted. The procedure is recorded in the "Annales de Dunstaplia": "When the body of the said Queen was departing from Dunstable, the bier rested in the centre of the market place until the King's chancellor and the great men who were then present had marked out a fitting place where they might afterwards erect, at the royal expense, a cross of noticeable size; our Prior sprinkling holy water." There was no religious house at Geddington, but at that time it possessed a Royal hunting residence. Of the three crosses now remaining, Geddington has most successfully defied the work of time and restoration. The design, of a triangular plan, is uncommon, and both in feeling and execution it differs from the other crosses. It is considerably the best and most elegant of the three. It is divided into three stories. Of these the first is solid and between the shafts, on a curved face; it is carved with beautiful diaper work of roses, and with six shields displaying the arms of England and the Queen's arms of Castille, Leon and Ponthieu, which she had inherited in right of her mother. With the similar coats on the Northampton cross and on her tomb at Westminster, these are the earliest examples in England of two distinct heraldic ensigns marshalled by quarterings. Above this is the arcaded storey containing the sculptured figures of the Queen, planned to face the supporting shafts of the canopies above, an arrangement which somewhat spoils their effect, but is necessary to carry out the design of the whole. The canopies are surmounted by crocketed gables, and behind them are a tier of pinnacles similarly decorated. The third storey is composed of a cluster of plain pinnacles topped with small gables crocketed and decorated. The cross appears quite complete, but it is possible that there was some further ornament above it, probably a triangular shaft ending in a pinnacle.—A. D.

DAMAGE BY SQUIRRELS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your issue of April 20th you had an interesting Leader on that charming little denizen of our woodlands, the squirrel. I hope I am the last man in the world that would seek to exterminate the squirrel, but to those who own coniferous plantations, I am afraid the squirrel will have to be reckoned with. The writer of the Leader has evidently missed the chief offence of the squirrel, which is that of "ringing" or biting the bark off the trees at from two to three yards from the top. The next year the tree above the ring withers, and the next, dies; and the first wind breaks it off and the tree is done for. In one of my woods of about eighty acres there is a solid patch of conifers of about twenty acres, the rest being oak, with two or three clumps of beech. In walking through the wood it will be noticed that fragments of fresh bark will be found lying at the foot of a very great number of the trees, chiefly the Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*),



QUEEN ELEANOR'S CROSS AT GEDDINGTON.

and on looking up to find the cause, you see the bark all peeled off at about two to three yards from the top, in a ring three to six inches deep, with the result before mentioned. And looking round, scores of the tops of trees in pieces about two yards long are lying about, blown off by the wind, and the trees from which they are blown ruined, dilapidated, and will never now make a tree. If the number of trees injured in this small area be placed at one hundred, which is a very low estimate, and the value at the low figure of one pound each, there is one hundred pounds at once in damage. He would be a very humane man who could stand by and see his woodlands destroyed for purely sentimental reasons. The timber-crop of Britain is becoming an Imperial matter; but it would be idle to say that squirrels are so. In our woods composed of oak we never interfere with a squirrel, and never deny him all the acorns, beech-nuts, hazel-nuts, cones or the fungus *Elophomyces granulatus*, which he industriously digs up and devours. The incident reminds me of a neighbour, a very illustrious man, who, in self-defence, had to put down the capercaillie, which was being acclimatised, because they were destroying the whole of his young plantations. Of course, all this does not go to show that there are no conditions under which both squirrels and capercaillie can live without doing damage and in freedom.—F. W. RICH.

[We are obliged to Mr. Rich for his interesting letter. In our plea it was not assumed that he was altogether harmless in woodland, but there are many plantations of which he is the most innocent and beautiful inhabitant. England is not rich in its wild mammalia, and to slay ruthlessly one of the most interesting is criminal. The issue of the leaflet was a very strong measure to be taken by the Board of Agriculture.—Ed.]

HOUSES IN TREES.

[TO THE EDITOR.]
SIR,—On March 16th you published the photograph of a house in a tree, which, I think, was a mere grown-up affair. An illustration is sent of a similar structure turned to far more serious purposes. As its designer, I think it may interest you. A visit paid by my client to the Natural History Museum made sure of the fact, only hitherto suspected, that mammoths lurked in the dim interior of a shrubbery about six feet deep. Illustrations in your pages of the recent Royal visit to



A TREE DWELLING.

India, with tigers breaking cover, at once made tigers possible. It was imperative, then, that refuge be afforded to the intrepid hunter. Stable as it is in ordinary times, the tree and its house figured once as a balloon, after another from the Crystal Palace had sailed across the garden. The ladder was thrown down, and, ballast being obtained from the baby's sandpit, without the baby's consent, was lustily thrown out as the old tree rose in wobbly fashion, or was supposed to rise. When the wind roars through the upper branches, then its platform becomes a quarter-deck as pirate boarders are repulsed. It is a fort at other times, and, as illustrated, is serving a stern purpose. Its hollow interior is tenanted by a small damsel, whose head can be seen poked out of the dungeon window. Found wandering with a hammer in her possession, she was at once imprisoned without option of a fine, and notwithstanding protestations of entire disagreement with the militant side of the Feminist Movement. But enough; the client was a delightful one to work for, abounding in enthusiasm and of an imagination faster leaping than one's own. The platform made in the fork of a tree is railed round, and has in its floor a trap-door, which is pushed up on entering from the top of the ladder. Another ladder leads down from the trap into the hollow interior of the dungeon.—C. H. B. QUENNEL.

THE MAY-POLE AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Throughout all the villages in this part of the Midlands, May Day is still kept as a much-prized festival, on which the children look forward to going round

the parish with their May garland, singing songs and collecting pence to defray the expenses of a "tea" in the afternoon. The garland, which varies slightly in shape and decoration in different parishes, is made of two intersected hoops fastened to a pole about eight feet high, the whole gaily adorned with flowers and ribands. Four of the children represent the May Queen and King and their Lord and Lady. The songs chosen by the schoolmaster have not the attraction of the old ditty:



THE CELEBRATION OF MAY MORNING.

May-pole day,
Fine and gay,
Happy is our new May-day.
Ladies and gentlemen,
Don't turn away
We wish you may be happy on this first day of May.

Dance round the May-pole,
Trit, trit, trot.
See what a May-pole we have got!
Garlands above,
Garlands below,
See what a May-pole we can show!

Years ago, too, besides the public one, every house would have its garland, and still in this village, children, too tiny to accompany their elders on their long round, are not content unless they have a posy tied to a stick to march about with.—M. STANTON, Armscote, Stratford-on-Avon.

THE FOREST FLY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I send you a photograph of the forest fly (enlarged three diameters) which I think may interest you and give an idea of the short, stubby, thick-set fly so hard to get rid of when it lands on a horse in the New Forest district. From



THE FOREST FLY.



TABANUS AUTUMNALIS.

its head to end of tail the fly is about a quarter of an inch long, and, with its clinging claws, brushing it off is impossible. The second photograph shows a very large biting fly (*Tabanus autumnalis*).—E. K. PEARCE.

JAY KILLING MOUSE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have found what I believe to be rather a new claim for the jay for merciful consideration on the part of those who do not think his character sufficiently clear of offences against the game-preserving interest. I was going up a path among gorse bushes, when a jay, seeing me, suddenly rose from the ground with the usual scold of his kind, and went flying up into some trees on

the left. I went on, and just as I came to the spot from which he had risen I saw on the ground a mouse—of the long-tailed species—dead and bleeding from a wound in the head. Now it is just possible, of course, that a stoat or weasel might have killed it, and for some reason left it, and that the jay who had watched the murder from the trees might then have pounced down to investigate closer. Or it is conceivable that a kestrel might have been the killer, and have gone, without my seeing it, as I came up. But it is far more likely that the jay did the killing for itself; the circumstantial evidence is very strong: the wound on the mouse's head was still bleeding. I have not a doubt that the jay was the actual killer, and as I looked back, having passed the corpse by fifty or sixty yards, I saw the jay returning to its quarry again, and I have no doubt he made a meal off it. In fact, I am morally sure that that jay killed that mouse, and if it is so, it establishes the jay with a new claim to be taken off the black-list. If it will kill a mouse of this kind, no doubt it will, and does, kill voles too. It may be quite a thing of common knowledge to many people that a jay will do this, but I have never seen such a thing before. I have seen a jay killing young blackbirds, which it has taken out of the parent nest, quite heedless of the

furious scolding and attacks of the old blackbirds. But I have never before seen it attacking a furred thing. There is no reason, however, why it should not, and with the vision of this slain mouse before me I am confident that it does. Perhaps it kills many.—HORACE G. HUTCHINSON.

GIANT CLUSTERS OF FIR CONES.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The enclosed photograph shows an abnormal bunch of cones on a Scotch pine on the North Hill here. The same tree has other bunches nearly as large, but no other trees apparently have more than the ordinary two or four in a group. It seems worth making an enquiry as to the probable cause of such a growth, and some of the readers of your esteemed paper may be able to help with an explanation.—J. F. TWIST, Minehead.

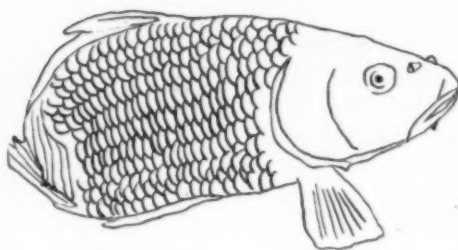
[Abnormally large cone clusters of the above description have this year been found in different parts of Britain. On the Glen Feochan estate, a little

to the south of Oban, in Argyllshire, some similar bunches of ripening cones were collected, and one of these, which we saw about two months ago, comprised twenty-four well-developed cones. To produce exceptional fruition of this kind, the essential physiological and climatic factors must have been (1) a favourable growing season during the year before flowering, so that large supplies of reserve nutrients could be drawn upon in order to form an exceptionally large number of flowering buds; (2) favourable conditions for pollination of the female flowers; and (3) immunity from severe frosts during the spring until the young cones were fairly well developed.—Ed.]

MAIMED CARP FROM THE ISSYK KUL.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—When the members of a Russian expedition for a survey of the fauna of Turkestan were exploring the Issyk Kul (Lake Issyk), which lies some distance to the north of the Tian Shun, they captured a couple of carp—one in 1906 and the other in 1909—each of which had undergone what can only be described as a terrible injury, although both appeared to be in a thoroughly healthy condition. Both had, in fact, lost the whole of the tail-fin, while one (shown in the illustration) had likewise been deprived of the entire caudal region, and the other the greater part of the



TAILLESS BUT HEALTHY.

same. In each instance the injury was probably inflicted by a predacious fish or bird, and as the two fishes appeared to be of about the same age it is suggested that they were injured simultaneously. Neither showed any signs of regeneration of the last portion of the body. In the first and most seriously injured fish the hind part of the body had been amputated just behind the dorsal and ventral fins; but instead of forming a straight line the wound assumed a kind of funnel shape, with its point in the neighbourhood of the vent. In healing, the hind portion of the dorsal and anal fins had become approximately, although not completely, in contact. At this point there was a distinct compression of the body, especially in the neighbourhood of the lateral

line, and the scales were relatively small, probably as the result of regeneration. This extreme tenuity seems to have enabled the hind extremity of the body to take on the function of a caudal fin. The total length of the maimed fish was about five inches. An examination of the internal organs showed that the swim-bladder had experienced severe injury, the hind portion being reduced to a narrow tube, which looked as though it were merely an appendage of the uninjured front portion; and it accordingly seems that the hind part of this organ had been almost completely bitten away, the narrow tube by which it was represented being probably formed out of a small remnant or entirely regenerated. The second specimen, as already mentioned, had suffered less serious injury, part of the caudal region being retained. Recovery from the injury is, therefore, less marvellous than in the case of the first specimen.

The original account of these maimed carp is given by Professor J. K. Tarnani in the "Comptes Rendus" of the Imperial Society of Naturalists of St. Petersburg, Vol. xlii., p. 1.—R. L.

THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—One hears of the struggle for life among animals and birds in the tropical jungles, but very little of the insect world around and the struggle they make for existence. I believe there are eleven hundred species of ichneumon flies on the look-out for prey; spiders fall a victim to many. Sixty larvae have emerged from large caterpillars. This fly laid its eggs outside the caterpillar (generally they are hidden inside). Nine out of ten cabbage butterfly caterpillars fall a prey to the inroads of one such an enemy. Possibly you may think the enclosed of interest.—E. K. P.



CATERPILLAR EATEN BY LARVÆ.

WALLABY CARRYING YOUNG.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I think your readers may be interested in the enclosed photograph, taken at the Edgbaston Botanical Gardens, of the wallaby carrying its young in its pouch. It is expected that the young will be separated from their mother within the next few days.—MARIAN SILVERSTON.

TRANSFER COMPOSITION.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I venture to ask if you or any of your readers can give me a recipe for a transfer composition which can be used to transfer designs for embroidery, etc., from the drawing to the fabric? I think this might be of some interest to your public, as I have found several people have had difficulty in finding such a composition that will not injure the fabric on which it is printed.—C. A. HARDING.



THE YOUNG IN ITS POUCH.